FULL 68 PAGES

AMAZING STORIES

Sinister TALES

APPROVED COMIC

No 69

1/-

Mandrake's hypnotic magic fights the weird devices of The Toymaker

MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN

MENACE of the CITY JUNGLE!

SINISTER TALES No. 69
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THE HEART BEAT OF A GREAT CITY'S LAW ENFORCEMENT IS ITS POLICE CHIEF...AND THE CHIEF IS WORRIED...
IT'S A KING-SIZED PROBLEM! MILES OF PARK...IT WOULD TAKE A THOUSAND OFFICERS TO PATROL IT PROPERLY!
BUT THERE MUST BE SOME WAY WE CAN CLEAN THINGS UP!

HOW? THE PARK WAS MADE FOR THE PEOPLE...AND THESE VERMIN WHO MURDER AND MAIM FROM THE SHADOWS CAN'T BE DISTINGUISHED FROM DECENT CITIZENS UNTIL THEY STRIKE!

BUT THAT VERY EVENING, ONE MAN BELIEVES SOMETHING CAN BE DONE...MANDRAKE...
BUT, MANDRAKE, NOBODY GOES INTO THE PARK AT NIGHT ALONE! IT ISN'T SAFE!
I'M NOT LOOKING FOR SAFETY, NARDA...I'M HOPING THIS EXPENSIVE SILK HAT WILL DRAW THE MUGGERS OUT LIKE A MAGNET!

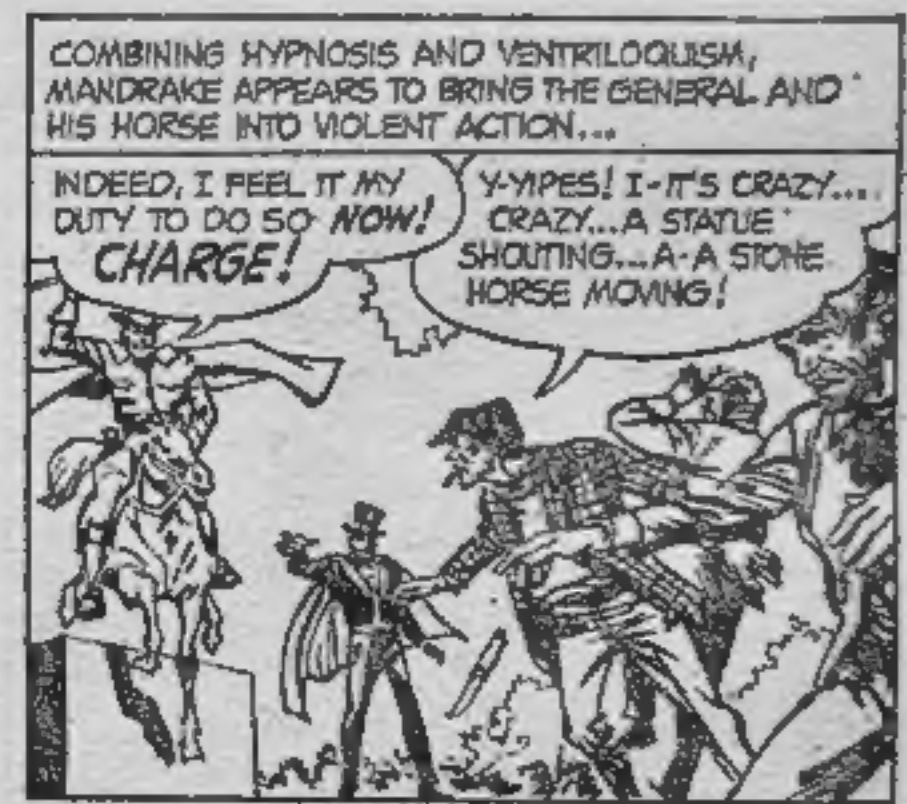
ME GO WITH?
NO, LOTHAR, ONE LOOK AT YOU AND THEY'D BE FRIGHTENED OUT OF MY TRAP! YOU AND NARDA WAIT...AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!

MANDRAKE MOVES INTO THE SILENT, OMINOUS DARKNESS... AND A WHOLE CITY KNOWS THE DANGER THAT AWAITS WITHIN...

THEN, IT HAPPENS...
A LITTLE BIRDIE TOLD US WE WAS ABOUT TO COME INTO SOME FAT CASH, MISTER! HA, HA!
HEY, FANCY HAT! HOLD IT RIGHT THERE!

NOW, SOCIETY MAN, YOU JUST START TURNING OVER EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT! FAST! BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T WE'LL MAKE A MUD PIE OUTTA THAT COSTUME...
REALLY! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF SUCH TALK, GENERAL?

ABRUPTLY, MANDRAKE GESTURES HYPNOTICALLY AND...
OUTRAGEOUS! IN MY DAY WE WOULD HAVE THRASHED SUCH VILLAINS TO WITHIN AN INCH OF THEIR LIVES!


COMBINING HYPNOSIS AND VENTRILOQUISM, MANDRAKE APPEARS TO BRING THE GENERAL AND HIS HORSE INTO VIOLENT ACTION...
INDEED, I FEEL IT MY DUTY TO DO SO NOW! CHARGE!
Y-YIPES! I-IT'S CRAZY... CRAZY...A STATUE SHOUTING...A-A STONE HORSE MOVING!

TRAMPLE THEM INTO THE GROUND, MY GOOD STEED! LET THE THIEVING DOGS KNOW WHAT AWAITS THEM WHEN THEY ATTACK HONEST CITIZENS!
A-A COP! HELP... HELP US!

A STATUE... TRYIN' TO KILL US!
D-DO SOMETHING! SHOOT IT! QUICK! T-THE HORSE IS CHARGING!
THERE'S NOTHING BEHIND YOU!

I-IT'S NOT MOVING...IT'S BACK ON THE STAND! H-HOW COME?
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, SIR?

IT'S ABOUT AN ATTEMPTED ROBBERY AND ASSAULT, OFFICER! THEY MUST HAVE SEEN YOU COMING AND MADE UP THAT WILD STORY! I'LL PLACE CHARGES AGAINST THEM LATER!
I SEE! THANKS! PLEASE BE IN COURT AT 9 A.M.! START MOVING, PUNKS!

ONCE AGAIN, MANDRAKE CONTINUES ON HIS PARK PATROL...
THREE MUGGERS WHO WILL THINK THREE TIMES BEFORE ATTACKING CITIZENS AGAIN...IT'S JUST A DROP OF JUSTICE IN A BIG BUCKET...BUT EVERY LITTLE BIT HELPS...

SUDDENLY, AN HOUR LATER...
H-HELP! A-ARGH!
TROUBLE AGAIN!

THEN...
ANOTHER COUNTRY HEARD FROM, EH! OKAY, FLASHY, YOU GET IT TOO!

ONCE AGAIN, MANDRAKE GESTURES TO CAST HIS MIGHTY HYPNOTIC MAGIC...AND...
THE GROUND SHALL OPEN UP...
HEY! I-I'M SINKING INTO THE SIDEWALK!

AND SWALLOW YOU AND YOUR EVIL! NOW!
LOUIE... DO SOMETHING... I-I'M BURIED IN THE SIDEWALK!

BUT FROM THE EYES OF HIS PAL, ALL SEEMS NORMAL...
HAVE YOU FLIPPED YOUR WAR BONNET? BURIED! STOP STANDING LIKE A FROZEN HERRING AND HELP ME FRISK THESE GUYS!
CAN'T YA SEE? CAN'T YA! I'M UP TO MY NECK IN CONCRETE, LOUIE!

NOW CUT THE COMEDY AND PLAY FOR THE MARBLES! DIG OUT THE BREAD, BUSTER... AND THAT MEANS DOUGH!
PUT UP YOUR GUN, TOUGH GUY! YOU'RE GOING TO JAIL!

INSTANTLY, A MYRIAD OF FIGURES SEEM TO APPEAR...

ALL RIGHT, LOUIE... SHOOT THE GUN!

BUT BE SURE...

...YOU DON'T MISS...

...SHOOT FAST...

...AND TRY...

...TO HIT...

...THE RIGHT ONE!

G-GULP ????

DESPERATELY, THE PARK MUGGER FIRES HIS WEAPON...
NO, NO, LOUIE!--YOU'RE FIRING AT THE WRONG MAN!
I'M OVER HERE! CAN'T YOU SEE ME?
BAM! BAM! BAM!

TH-THERE HE IS, LOUIE! BY THE ROCKS!
TUT, TUT! I'M AFRAID YOU'RE NO MARKSMAN AT ALL! YOU MISSED AGAIN!
BAM BAM! BAM!

AND NOW IT'S OUR TURN, LOUIE! HERE WE COME!
T-TWO GANGS OF 'EM...COMIN' AT ME FROM BOTH SIDES!

T-TAKE 'EM AWAY! I-I CAN'T STAND IT...THERE'S TOO MANY OF HIM!

THEN, MANDRAKE BREAKS THE ILLUSION...
OH-H-H!
I'M ON TOP OF THE GROUND AGAIN!

WHAT IN THUNDERATION IS GOING ON HERE?.
I'M A VISITOR TO YOUR CITY...WITH THE EMBASSY! THESE TWO...CREATURES TRIED TO ROB ME...

...BUT THAT GENTLEMAN SAVED ME!
THAT ONE GUY? BUNK! THERE WAS DOZENS OF HIM ALL AROUND! THEY TRIED TO KILL ME!

ONLY I SAW THE CRIME COMMITTED, OFFICER! IF THEY THINK THEY SAW OTHERS, IT MUST BE THEIR EVIL IMAGINATIONS!
SURE, IT'S A BAD LOT THESE MUGGERS ARE!

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME, MIKE! CARE TO GIVE ME A HAND TO THE STATION HOUSE WITH THESE TWO?
THAT WILL BE A PLEASURE, M'LAD!

MIKE...THE BEST-LIKED OFFICER ON THE FORCE! EVEN AT HIS AGE HE REQUESTED PARK DUTY BECAUSE OF THE SOCIAL MENACE HERE! I MUST DO MORE!

AND NEXT DAY, AS MANDRAKE SPEAKS WITH THE POLICE CHIEF...
EMBASSY ATTACHE ATTACKED BY MUGGERS—SAVED BY MANDRAKE. POLICE ACTION DEMANDED!
IT'S A DISGRACE, MANDRAKE! MY DEPARTMENT IS BEING MADE A LAUGHING STOCK!
YES....

...WHAT WE MUST DO IS TERRORIZE THE TERRORISTS... WITH A SECRET WEAPON!
SECRET WEAPON?

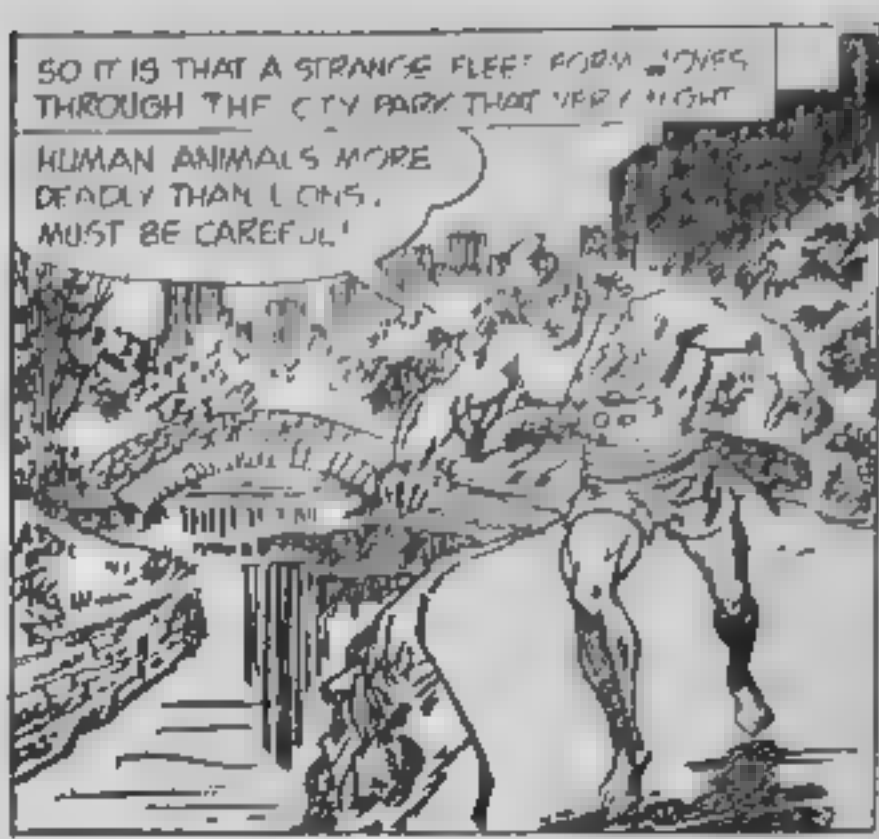
PRECISELY, CHIEF! AND I THINK I HAVE EXACTLY THE WEAPON THAT WILL WORK AGAINST THEM!
WE CAN'T TURN THE PARK INTO A MILITARY CAMP, MANDRAKE!

NO...BUT TO FIGHT A CIVILIZED JUNGLE WAR WE CAN USE A JUNGLE MAN!
LOTHAR!

BUT EVEN LOTHAR IS JUST ONE MORE MAN WITH A GUN... WE NEED A THOUSAND TO PROTECT THE PARK PROPERLY!
DESPITE LOTHAR'S HIGH EDUCATION IN OUR SOCIETY, HE USES ONLY A ROPE, CHIEF!

NO GUN! JUST ROPE!
LOTHAR'S CAPTURED JUNGLE LIONS WITH A ROPE, CHIEF! WHY NOT DEPUTIZE HIM?

ALL RIGHT, MANDRAKE I'M SOLD! LOTHAR...YOU ARE NOW AN OFFICIAL OFFICER OF THE LAW! THE ENTIRE PARK IS YOUR BEAT.
ME BEAT MUGGERS G YOU!


SO IT IS THAT A STRANGE FLEET FORM JONES THROUGH THE CITY PARK THAT VERY NIGHT
HUMAN ANIMALS MORE DEADLY THAN LIONS. MUST BE CAREFUL!

MOVING WITH THE STEALTH OF AN ANIMAL, LOTHAR GIVES THE PEOPLE WHO PREY ON HUMANS LITTLE CHANCE.
BAD ONES STRIKE AGAIN!...

WITH JUNGLE MIGHT HE STRIKES SWIFTLY.
Yiii!
A-A WILD MAN!

AND LOTHAR IS PROUD OF HIS NEW JOB....
YOU TAKE THESE...LOTHAR GET MORE FOR YOU, MIKE!
WONDERFUL, LOTHAR! YOU'RE A GREAT OFFICER!

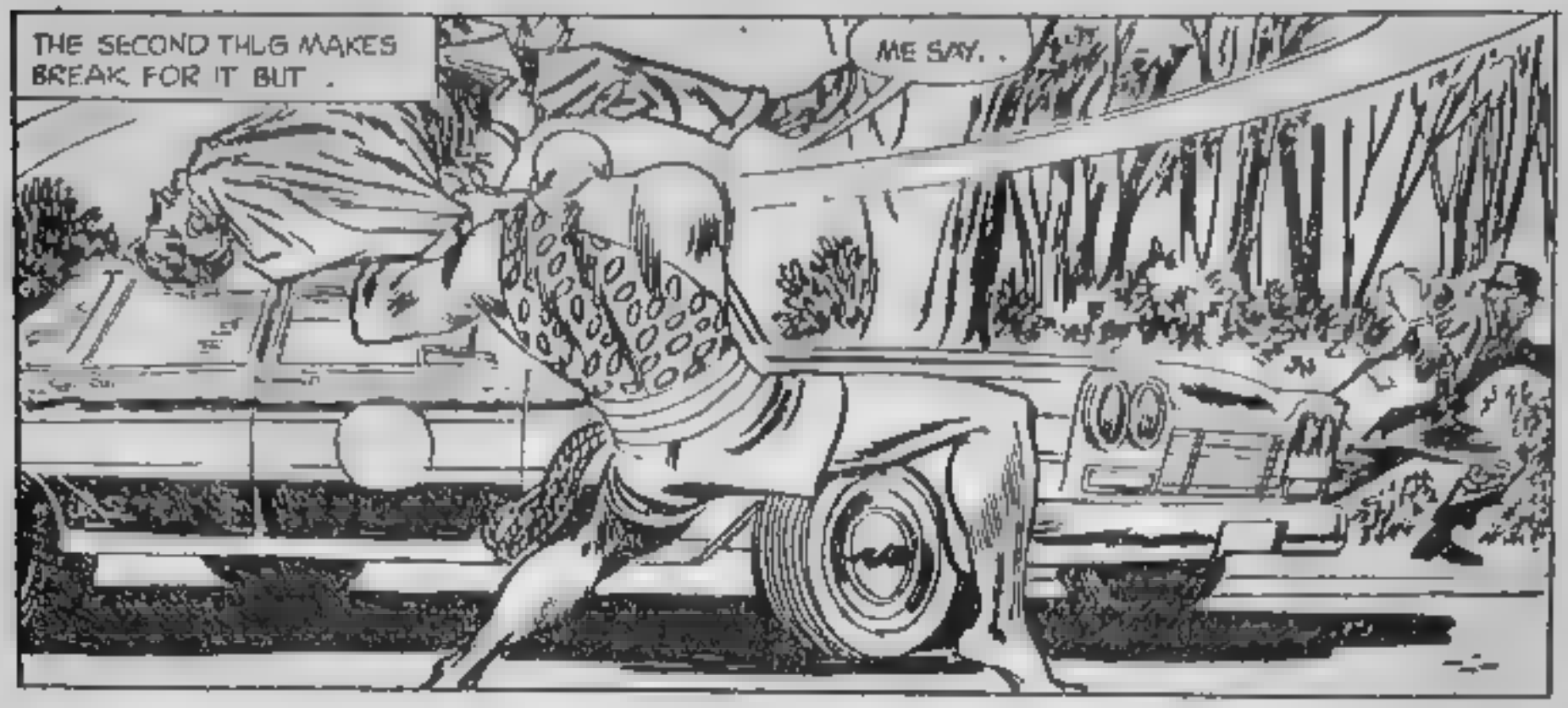
AND LATER ..
BAD MAN WITH GUN ..TRYING ROB DRIVER!...

FEET THAT HAVE RACED THROUGH TEN THOUSAND MILES OF JUNGLE NOW SWIFTLY TROD THE PARK STREET...
THEY LOOK FOR DARK PLACE TO DO CRIME ..

ME BE THERE!

THEN AS THEY REACH A SHELTERED AREA...
OKAY, BUSTER, GET UP THE CASH!
H-HUH? WH-WHO'S THAT?

SUDDENLY...
ME LOTHAR...LOTHAR COP! DO NOT MOVE!
Y-YIKES!


THE SECOND THUG MAKES BREAK FOR IT BUT .
ME SAY. .

...DO NOT MOVE!
TH-TH S IS IT...TOO MANY YEARS PILOTING A CAB! I-I'VE TOSSED MY COCONUTS!

THE NEWS GOES OUT...CITY PARK IS BEING PROTECTED BY A JUNGLE MAN...
CITY NEWS
JUNGLE-MAN PATROLS PARK
ARRESTS AND HOG-TIES 'LIKE WE DO IN JUNGLE'
NABS 6 MUGGERS IN ONE NIGHT

BUT, STRANGELY, LOTHAR'S FELLOW OFFICERS DO NOT ALL LIKE THE IDEA...
LOTHAR...A JUNGLE MAN! IT MAKES US LOOK KIND OF SICK, DOESN'T IT!
SURE DOES...AS IF WE COULDN'T DO OUR DUTY!

AND IN THE STATION HOUSE LOCKER ROOM, THE FEELING CANNOT BE SMOTHERED...
WE HAVE WIVES AND FAMILIES, LOTHAR! YOU'RE MAKING US LOOK SILLY!
ME JUST TRY AND HELP PROTECT CITY!

AND IN THE UNDERWORLD PLANS ARE BEING MADE TO STOP "THE JUNGLE MAN"...

WE'LL FIX THIS CHARACTER GOOD!

NOW HERE'S HOW WE WORK IT. I'LL LURE THE BIG GOON TO THE BOATHOUSE. YOU GUYS WILL BE WAITING!...

THAT'S IT.

TO THE BOATHOUSE

HELP! HELP!

LEOPARD SKIN TOOK THE BAIT! HA HA! WHEN HE PASSES THAT DOOR, HE'LL THINK AN ELEPHANT FELL ON 'IM!

BUT SUDDENLY, LOTHAR PAUSES...HIS KEEN EARS PICK UP SUSPICIOUS SOUNDS...

FEET MOVING...PEOPLE BREATHING...LIKE WAITING ANIMALS IN JUNGLE...

BOAT HOUSE

THEN...

THEY MAKE TRAP FOR LOTHAR!

YIII! AWWK!

QUICKLY LOTHAR UNLEASHES HIS JUNGLE FURY UPON HIS WOULD-BE ATTACKERS.

ME MAKE GOOD CATCH TONIGHT. MANY MUGGERS ALL TOGETHER!

BUT THE NEXT DAY, THE POLICE ARE MORE DOWNCAST THAN EVER AS..

LOTHAR DOES IT AGAIN! NABS EIGHT PARK HOODLUMS IN BOATHOUSE!

WE MIGHT AS WELL RETIRE! EVERYBODY IS WONDERING WHY *WE* CAN'T DO THE SAME THING!

THE CHIEF IS DISTURBED ABOUT HIS MEN...

BUT, CHIEF, YOU WANTED TO RID THE TOWN OF MUGGERS! LOTHAR'S *DOING* IT!

I KNOW! WE WANTED HIM TO TERRORIZE THE TERRORISTS.. BUT HE'S *ALSO* TERRORIZING THE POLICE!

LOTHAR IS DOWNCAST AS HE PATROLS HIS BEAT NEXT NIGHT...

LOTHAR'S *BEST* NOT GOOD *ENOUGH*...WISH FELLOW COPS FRIENDLY WITH *ME* LIKE THEY ARE WITH *MIKE!* ME ASK HIM WHAT DO...

AND SUDDENLY, IT HAPPENS...

IF WE CAN'T BEAT THE JUNGLEMAN, WE'LL GIVE IT TO OLD MIKE! HE ALWAYS PATROLS ALONE! LET'S GO!

YEAH! HE SENT MOST OF US UP THE RIVER FOR TIME! *NOW YOU GET IT, COPPER!*

??

MIKE IN TROUBLE!

ABRUPTLY, A FUSILLADE OF JUNGLE POWER IS UNLEASHED FROM LOTHAR'S LIMBS ..
Y-YIPES... IT'S HIM... THE JUNGLE MAN!
H-HOW'D HE GET HERE?
WAP!
POW!

AND AFTERWARD...
MIKE HURT BAD! MUST GET HELP!

GREAT CATS! THEY MUST HAVE GANGED UP ON MIKE! LOTHAR'S SAVED HIM!
POLICE

LATER, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS ..
I JUST GOT WORD FROM THE HOSPITAL. LOTHAR! MIKE'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
HI LOTHAR! AFTER THAT JOB YOU DID SAVING MIKE, YOU CAN PATROL MY BEAT ANY TIME.

SAME HERE, BAREFOOT BOY! YOU'RE THE BEST MAN ON THE FORCE!
ME LIKED... JUST LIKE MIKE NOW!

THANKS, MEN! BUT LOTHAR'S GOING OFF DUTY FOR GOOD! IF YOU EVER NEED HIM AGAIN LET US KNOW!
HA, HA! THOSE MUGGERS ARE SCARED SILLY! I DON'T THINK THEY'LL EVER BE BACK!
The End.

TROOPS WERE CLOSING IN ON ROLF ROEBEL! IN HIS POSSESSION WAS THE STOLEN WEALTH OF HIS COUNTRY! THERE WAS BUT ONE AVENUE OF ESCAPE OPEN TO ROLF... A MAGIC BREW CREATED BY THE STRANGE CHEMIST OF THE FOREST, A BREW THAT WOULD GIVE THE FUGITIVE A STRANGE POWER!

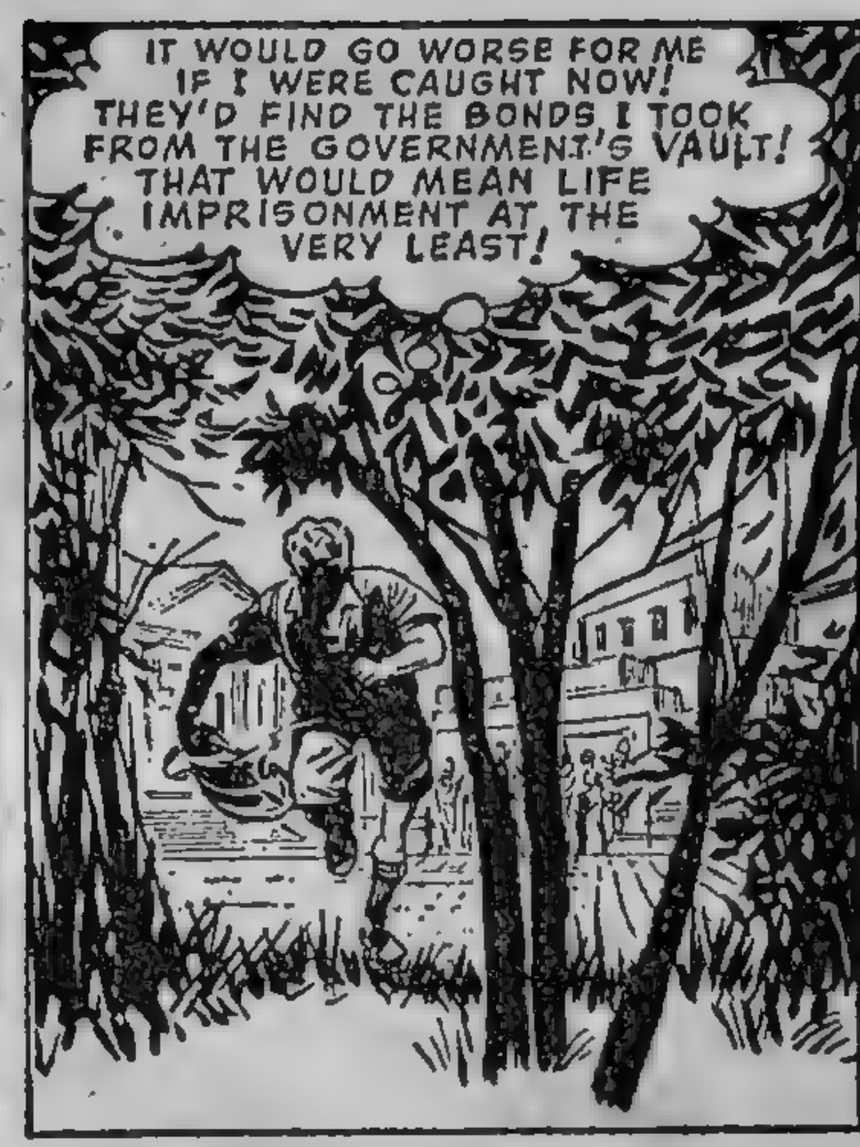
THE FRIGHTENED MAN

THE SMALL COUNTRY WAS INDEED HAVING ITS TROUBLES! A PETTY SWINDLER SUCH AS ROLF ROEBEL WAS A THORN IN HIS FELLOW COUNTRYMEN'S SIDE...

THEY MADE A HASTY SEARCH OF THE STATE BUILDING FOR ROLF... BUT WHO WOULD'VE EXPECTED TO FIND HIM IN A SUPPOSEDLY LOCKED VAULT?

ROLF ROEBEL FOUND MORE THAN A HIDING PLACE IN THAT VAULT...

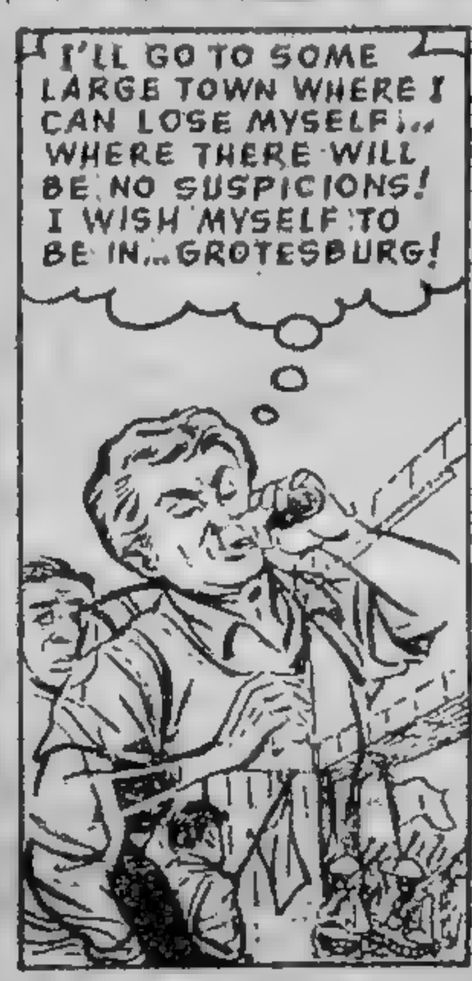
HE STUFFED THE BONDS IN HIS KNAPSACK AND SLIPPED OUT INTO THE NIGHT! BUT HE WAS QUICKLY DISCOVERED...



THE FUGITIVE MAN STUMBLED ON THROUGH THE NIGHT... ALWAYS BEHIND HIM WAS THE MUFFLED SOUND OF HORSES' HOOFS! AND WITH THE DAWN, THERE WAS NO LONGER THE PROTECTIVE CLOAK OF DARKNESS TO HIDE HIM...

NOBODY NOTICED ROLF ROEBEL AS HE MATERIALIZED IN AN ANCIENT FORT THAT FACED ON THE BORDER OF THE GREAT ENEMY TO THE EAST...

BUT THERE WAS TO BE NO FIGHTING! OVER A RADIO IN THE FORT, CAME AN ENEMY ANNOUNCEMENT...



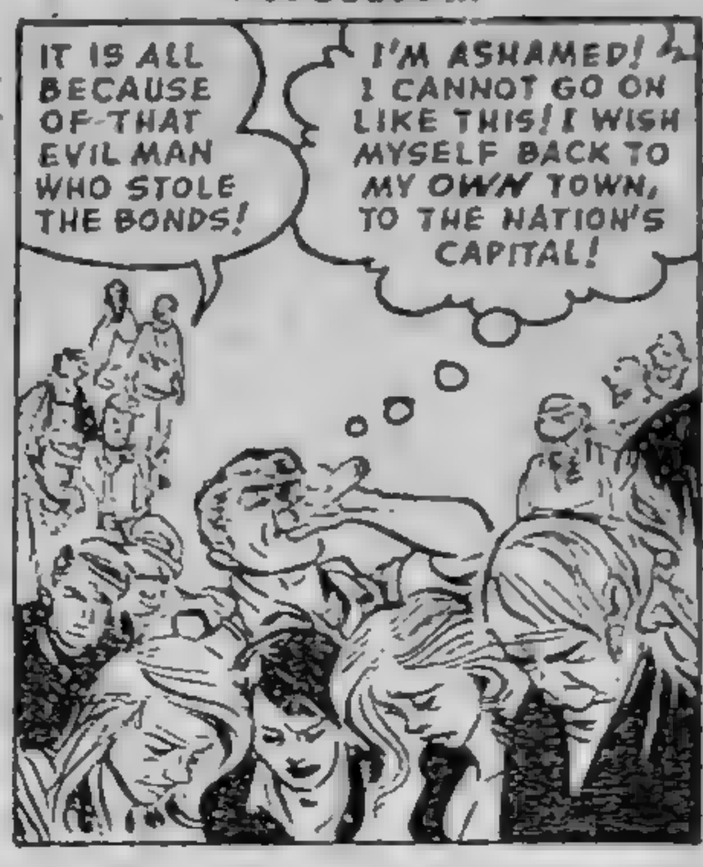
WHEN ROLF ROEBEL FIRST APPEARED IN GROTESBURG, HE WAS NOT IMMEDIATELY IMPRESSED BY THE ABSENCE OF PEOPLE ON ITS USUALLY BUSY STREETS...

HE WANDERED AIMLESSLY INTO THE MAIN PART OF TOWN... HE FOUND A CAFE THAT WAS OPEN, BUT HE NEVER ENTERED IT...

ROLF ROEBEL WAS GIVEN A QUICK TRIAL BY THE ENEMY...

ROLF ROEBEL TOOK A DEEP SWIG OF THE STRANGE BREW, AND HE WISHED...

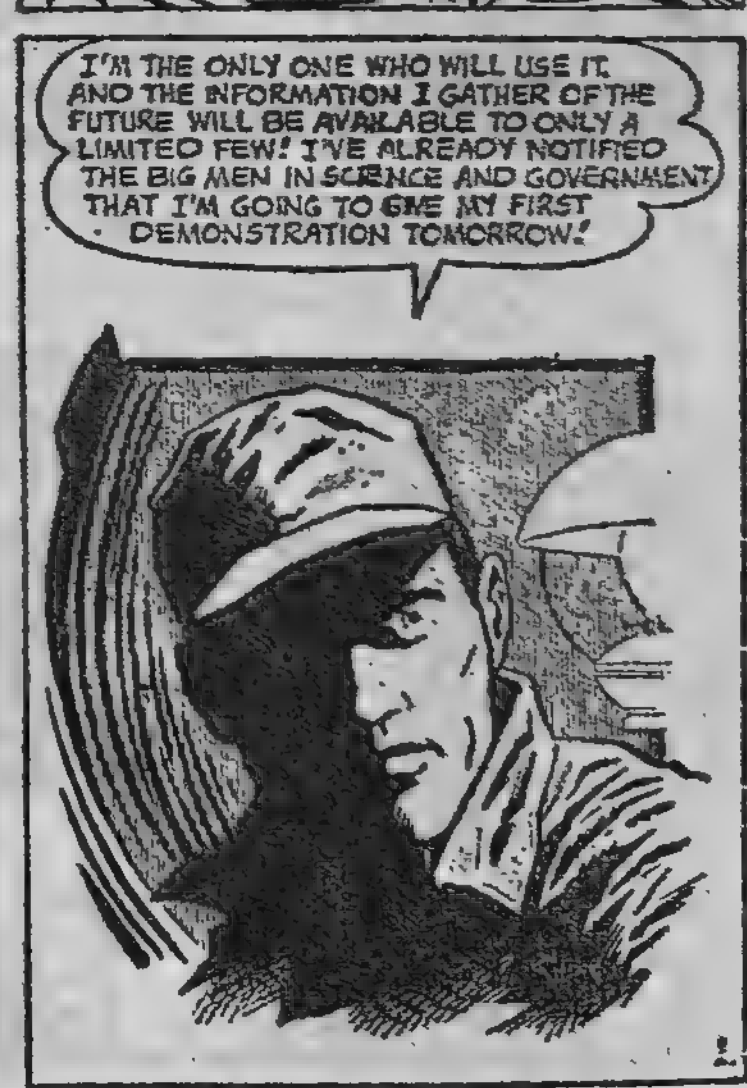
WHEREVER ROLF WENT IT WAS THE SAME...THE PEOPLE WERE BITTER, HOPELESS...



IT WAS THE LAST DROP LEFT IN THE BOTTLE OF MAGIC BREW...THE COLONEL WAS NOT EVEN AWARE OF ROLF'S RETURN TILL THE FUGITIVE SPOKE...

EARL BURTON, A BRILLIANT YOUNG SCIENTIST, HAD BUILT THE FIRST *TIME MACHINE*, LIMITED IN SCOPE, BUT CAPABLE OF TAKING HIM A FEW YEARS INTO THE FUTURE! WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN MANKIND *KNOWS* WHAT THE FUTURE WILL BRING? WITH THE INEVITABLE BEFORE HIM, WILL MAN *STILL* STRIVE FOR WANTED GOALS OR WILL HE SINK INTO APATHY, KNOWING THE FUTURE IS ORDAINED? HERE IS THE ANSWER!

I DIED TOMORROW!



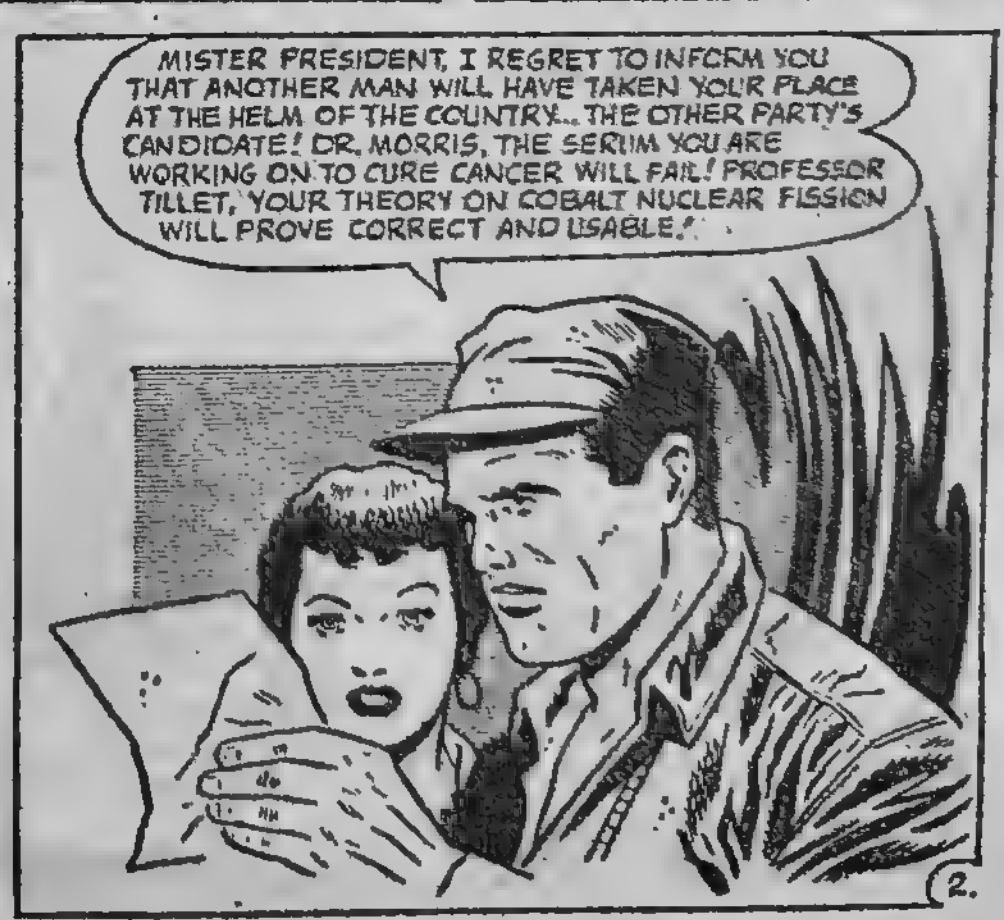
YOU GO HOME AND GET A GOOD NIGHT'S REST, KAY! I WANT YOU TO BE HERE WHEN I TRY THE MACHINE OUT! EVEN THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNTRY WILL BE HERE!
THEY GATHERED IN THE LITTLE LABORATORY THE NEXT DAY, THE SCIENTISTS, THE HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS... THE GREAT MEN!
GENTLEMEN, THE THEORY BEHIND THE MACHINE IS SIMPLE! EINSTEIN'S FAMOUS EQUATION E=Mc2, IS THE BASIS...TOTAL ANNIHILATION OF MATTER INTO ENERGY THAT PASSES BEYOND TIME, INTO THE FUTURE AND BECOMES MATTER AGAIN! I WILL NOW MAKE THE EXPERIMENT! IF YOU HAVE DEFINITE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE, WRITE THEM DOWN AND GIVE THEM TO ME!

THESE ARE THE QUESTIONS THAT REQUIRE ANSWERS FROM THE FUTURE! GOOD LUCK!

A STRANGE, STATIC HUM FILLED THE AIR! LIGHTS JUMPED ACROSS THE PANELS OF THE MACHINE! THEN IT BEGAN TO FADE...
IT'S GOING TO WORK! I REALLY DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD!
EARL! NO!

THEN THE MACHINE AND THE SCIENTIST WERE GONE...VANISHED AS THOUGH THEY HAD NEVER BEEN!
AMAZING! TRULY AMAZING!

A FEW SECONDS LATER, THE MACHINE MATERIALIZED EXACTLY WHERE IT HAD BEEN!
GENTLEMEN... IT WORKED! I TRAVELED TWO YEARS INTO THE FUTURE! I HAVE THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS YOU HAVE WRITTEN HERE!


MISTER PRESIDENT, I REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT ANOTHER MAN WILL HAVE TAKEN YOUR PLACE AT THE HELM OF THE COUNTRY...THE OTHER PARTY'S CANDIDATE! DR. MORRIS, THE SERUM YOU ARE WORKING ON TO CURE CANCER WILL FAIL! PROFESSOR TILLET, YOUR THEORY ON COBALT NUCLEAR FISSION WILL PROVE CORRECT AND USABLE!

LATER, AFTER THE OTHERS HAD LEFT...

THIS REPORTER WAS HIDING IN A CLOSET! SOMEHOW, HE GOT WIND OF WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE!

AND WHAT A SCOOP! SCIENTIST TRAVELS INTO FUTURE! YOUR FUTURE TOLD! PREDICTIONS FREE!

THIS IS AN OUTRAGE! WHAT I LEARN BY TRAVELING INTO THE FUTURE IS **NOT** FOR MASS CONSUMPTION! I'M A SCIENTIST, NOT A FORTUNE TELLER!

THIS IS A FREE COUNTRY WITH A FREE PRESS! YOU CAN'T STOP IT NOW!

THE REPORTER WAS RIGHT! SOON ALL THE WORLD KNEW OF THE BURTON ***TIME MACHINE!*** REPORTERS FROM ALL THE MAJOR PAPERS REQUESTED A DEMONSTRATION... AND COULD NOT BE REFUSED!

HE'S COMING BACK! WONDER IF HE'LL HAVE THE ANSWERS TO OUR QUESTIONS!

POOM!

THE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS, GENTLEMEN! ON THE FOURTH OF MARCH, CLAUDIUS WILL WIN THE NASHUA HANDICAP! THE NATIONAL A.L. AND P. COMPANY WILL GO BANKRUPT, DUE TO THEIR STOCKS BEING DUMPED ON THE MARKET! IRANIUM STOCKS WILL SKYROCKET!

TIME PASSED! THROUGH EARL'S PREDICTIONS, PEOPLE ***KNEW*** WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN, BUT WERE POWERLESS TO STOP IT ...

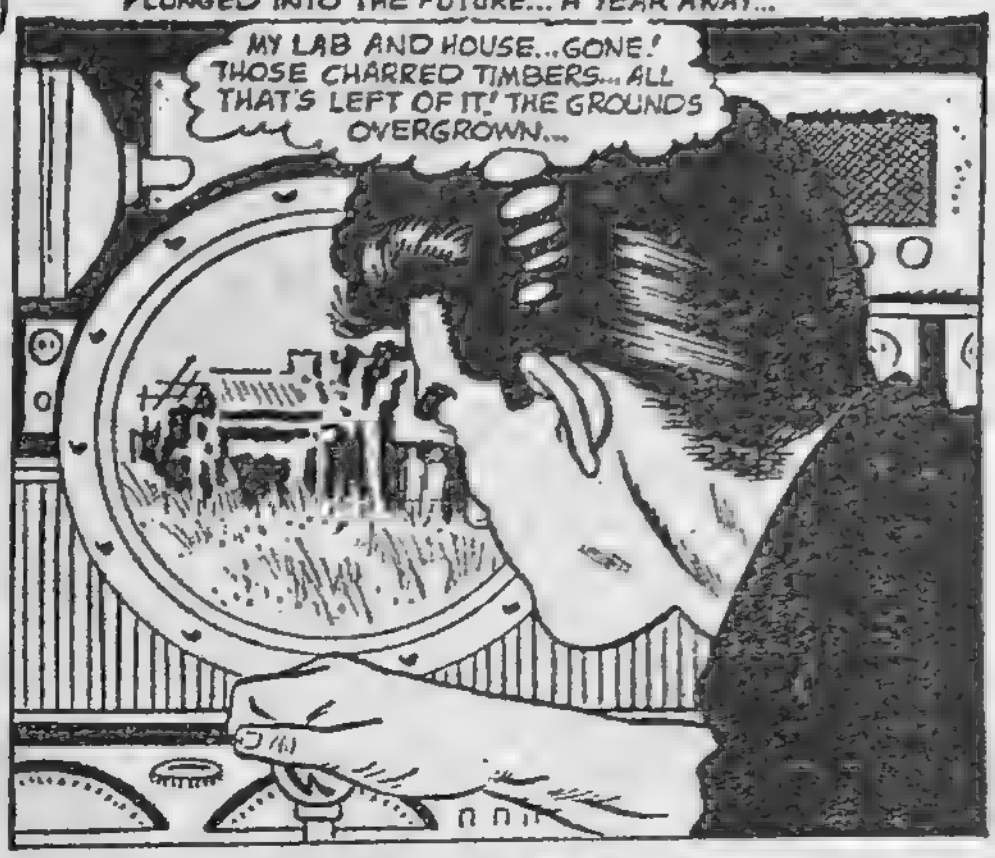
BUT, KAY, HOW CAN YOU ***DOUBT*** WHAT I SEE IN THE FUTURE, WHEN ALL MY PREDICTIONS HAVE PROVEN TRUE?

THEY BECAME TRUE ***BECAUSE*** PEOPLE FEEL THEY ARE ***INEVITABLE*** AND WORK TOWARD THAT END! THE PRESIDENT'S PARTY WITHDREW FROM THE ELECTIONS, BECAUSE YOU SAW THE ***OTHER*** PARTY'S CANDIDATE IN! IF HE HADN'T WITHDRAWN, PERHAPS HE ***WOULD*** HAVE ***WON!***

DR. MORRIS QUIT HIS RESEARCH BECAUSE YOU TOLD HIM HIS THEORY WOULD PROVE USELESS! PERHAPS IF HE'D GONE AHEAD, HE'D HAVE ***SUCCEEDED*** AND SAVED THOUSANDS OF LIVES! CLAUDIUS WON THE HANDICAP BECAUSE THE OTHER HORSE OWNERS WITHDREW THEIR ENTRIES! THAT COMPANY WENT BROKE BECAUSE YOU PREDICATED IT WOULD, AND THE PEOPLE DUMPED ALL ITS STOCKS!

YOU'RE ***MAKING*** THE FUTURE, ***NOT PREDICTING IT!*** THE FUTURE YOU SEE MIGHT ***NEVER*** COME TO PASS, IF PEOPLE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT! HOW DO WE ***KNOW*** IT CAN'T BE CHANGED? YOU'RE WORRIED YOURSELF!

NOT ABOUT THAT! I'VE FOUND NO SIGN OF ***MYSELF*** IN THE FUTURE! KAY, I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO DIE, SHORTLY!



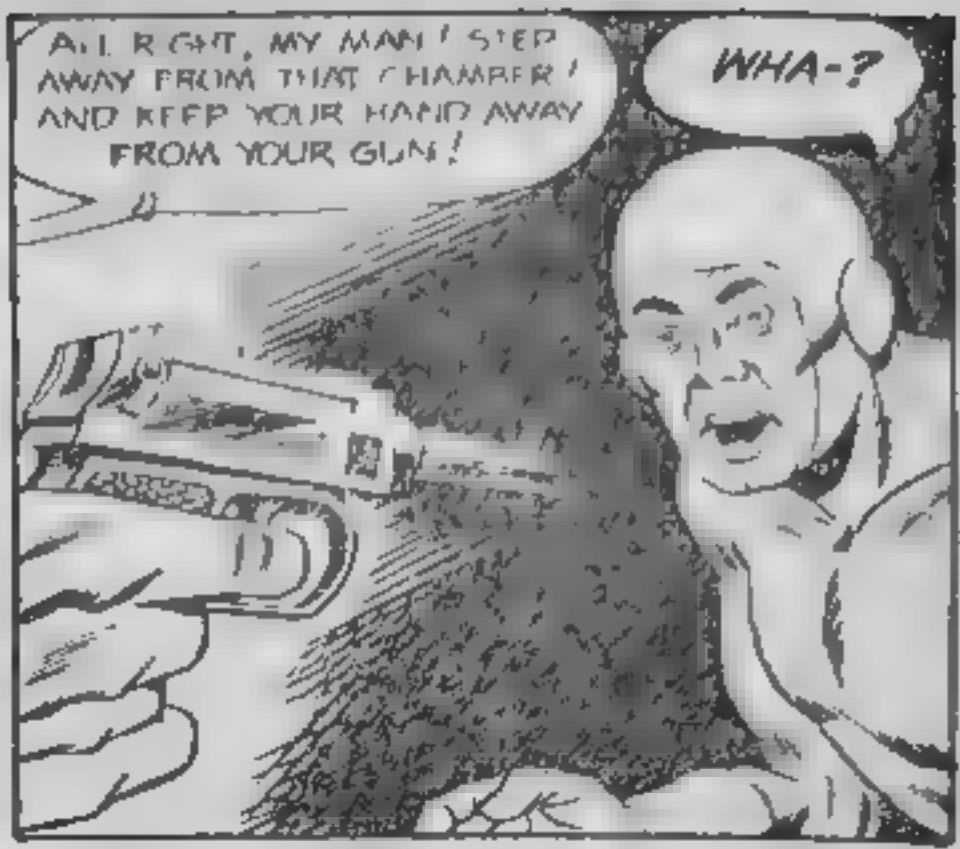
THEY FLED BY A BACK ENTRANCE, THROUGH THE GARAGE, UNSEEN BY THE MOB! THEY BOARDED A TRAIN, AND THROUGH THE NIGHT AND EARLY MORNING, PUT MANY MILES BETWEEN THEM AND THE BURNING HOUSE!

HE AGREED WITH HER! HE WANTED IT THIS WAY! BUT HE DIDN'T SHOW HER THE MORNING PAPER HE HAD BOUGHT AT THE LAST STOP... THE PAPER THAT READ...

LIGHTNING

"WHILE OUR HERO SLEEPS...!"

THUS, EVEN AS THE RESEARCH CONTINUES LATE INTO THE NIGHT .
HA ONLY ONE GUARD! THIS WILL BE A CINCH!


ALL RIGHT, MY MAN! STEP AWAY FROM THAT CHAMBER! AND KEEP YOUR HAND AWAY FROM YOUR GUN!
WHA-?

THE COURAGEOUS GUARD REFUSES TO COMPLY WITH THE ORDER...
FOOL! YOU ASKED FOR THIS!
CRAK!

BUT THE THUNDER SQUAD IS ALSO WORKING LATE ..
WHAT WAS THAT?
IT CAME FROM THE MEDICAL CORRIDOR!

IN THE STATE HE'S IN, I COULD SHOOT HIM RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES! BUT TRANSPORTING HIM ELSEWHERE WILL BETTER SERVE MY PURPOSES!

WITHIN SECONDS THE SQUAD REACHES THE ROOM... TOO LATE!
LIGHTNING'S VANISHED!
WH-WHERE'D HE GO?

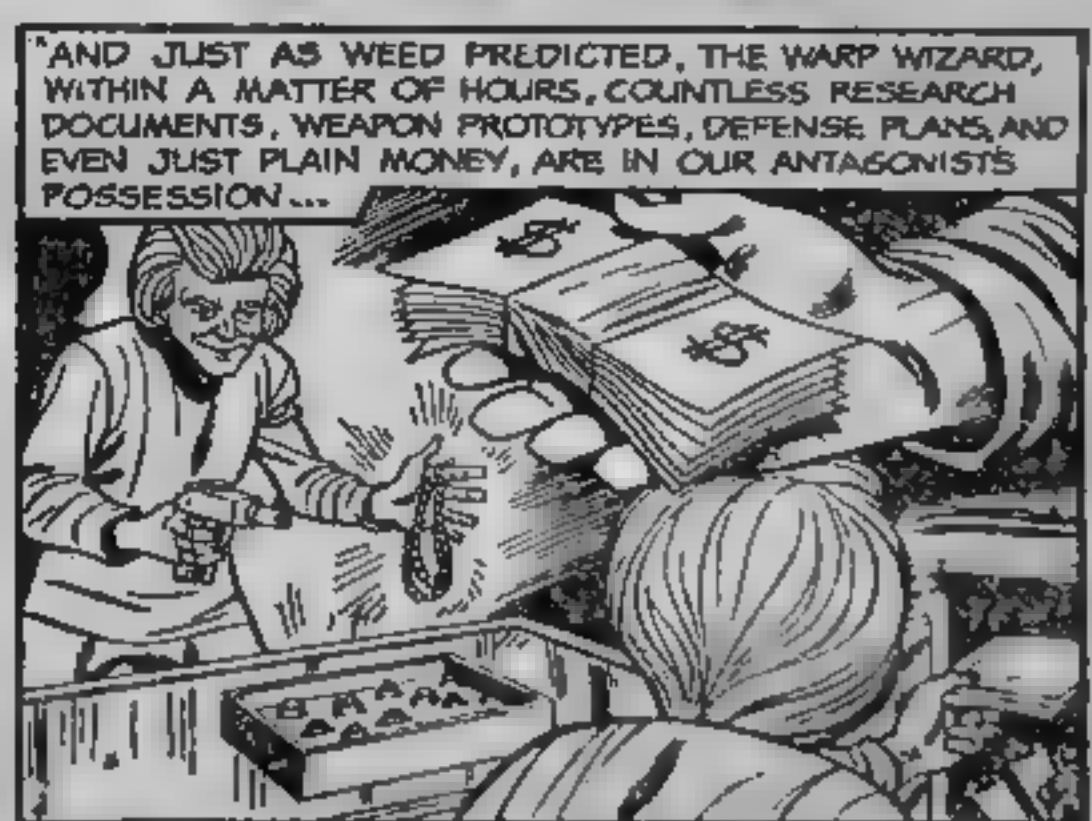
JUST THEN ..
... OOOO...
OVER HERE! THIS MAN IS STILL ALIVE!

TAKE IT EASY, MAN! WE'LL GET YOU MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY!
THE WIZARD... MUST STOP HIM .. GOING TO SHOOT GUY... MUST STOP...

SHORTLY... WE JUST CHECKED WITH THE MEDICAL BOYS! WE MUST FIND GUY WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS! AFTER THAT THERE WILL BE NO WAY TO CURE HIM!
AND WHAT'S WORSE, IF A CURE ISN'T FOUND BY THEN, OUR LOCATING GUY WILL DO NO GOOD!

BUT THE QUESTION IS - HOW DO WE FIND HIM? THAT FIEND COULD HAVE TRANSPORTED HIM ANYWHERE!
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY - WE MUST FIND THE WIZARD AND FORCE THE INFO OUT OF HIM!

MY GUESS IS THAT WITH LIGHTNING "OUT OF THE WAY" - HE'LL PROBABLY EMBARK ON A NEW SERIES OF CRIMES! WE'LL HAVE TO CATCH HIM, SOMEHOW!
THAT'S EASIER SAID THEN DONE. HOW DO YOU CATCH UP WITH A GUY WHO CAN STEP INTO ANOTHER DEMENSION!


"AND JUST AS WEED PREDICTED, THE WARP WIZARD, WITHIN A MATTER OF HOURS, COUNTLESS RESEARCH DOCUMENTS, WEAPON PROTOTYPES, DEFENSE PLANS, AND EVEN JUST PLAIN MONEY, ARE IN OUR ANTAGONIST'S POSSESSION...

AND WHAT OF THE SQUAD ?
LOOK! A FADING WARP ENTRANCE!
WE MISSED HIM AGAIN! HE'S BEEN HERE AND GONE!

THIS IS HOPELESS! WE'LL NEVER CATCH HIM THIS WAY!
AND TIME'S RUNNING OUT!
I GOT A FEELING I KNOW WHERE HE'S GOING TO SHOW UP EVENTUALLY AND WHEN HE DOES...

BUT THE ROBBERIES CONTINUE UNCHECKED...
TOP SECRET

NOT A BAD HAUL AT ALL...BUT THE MOST VALUABLE STUFF IS AT THUNDER'S ULTIMATE STRONGHOLD! LIGHTNING RE-GAINED WHAT I STOLE FROM THERE LAST TIME!..HEH! BUT HE'S HARDLY IN A POSITION TO STOP ME NOW!

WHA...
GOOD EVENING, WIZ! WE WERE HOPING YOU'D STOP BY!
STAY RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE, OR WE'LL SHOOT!

HA! G'WAN AHEAD! SHOOT ME -- SHOOT THE ONLY MAN WHO KNOWS WHERE LIGHTNING IS! AND THE SECRET WILL DIE WITH ME!
HE'S RIGHT! HE'S GOT US OVER A BARREL.. THE RAT!

AW, I SEEM TO HAVE DAMPENED YOUR SPIRITS! SORRY ABOUT THAT!... AND NOW, UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN!
MUSTN'T LET HIM ESCAPE! TIME'S RUNNING OUT! THIS MAY BE OUR CHANCE TO SAVE GUY!

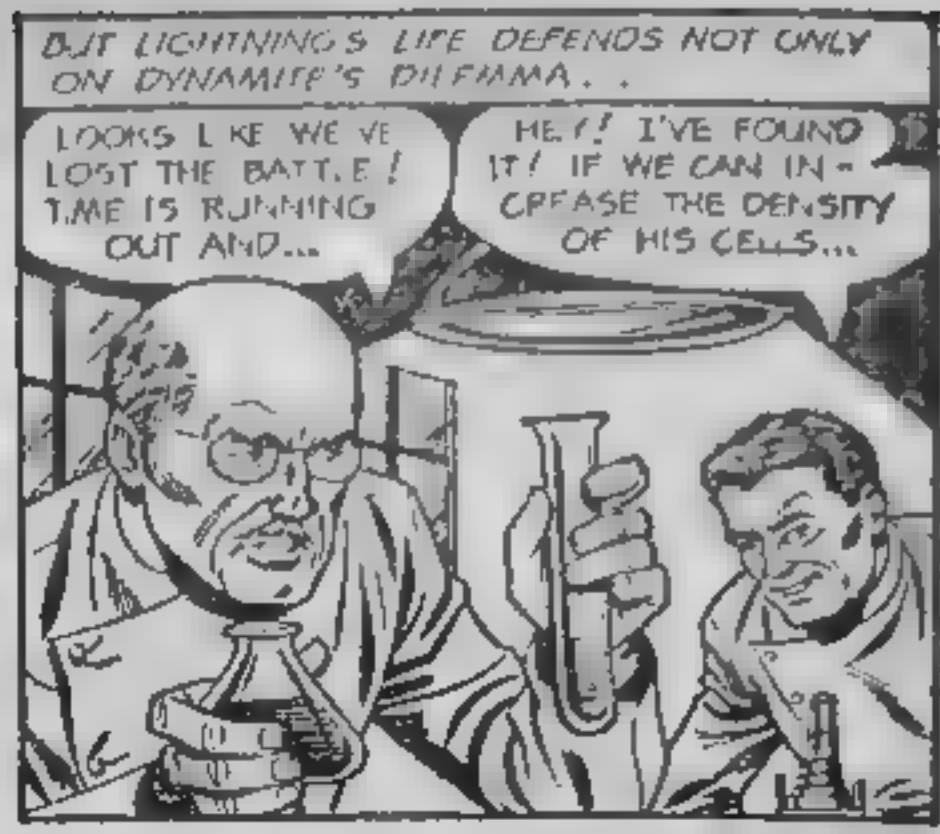
SPRINGING FORWARD AT SURPRISING SPEED, DYNAMITE DOES THE NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE...
GOT HIM! NOW I CAN PASS THROUGH THE WARP WITH HIM!

AND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WARP...THE WIZARD'S LAIR...
DRAT! HE BROKE FREE FROM MY GRIP!
IT'S A GOOD THING I WAS PREPARED FOR THIS EVENTUALITY! BUT I MUST ACT FAST!

I WAS PLANNING ON USING THIS TRICK ON LIGHTNING, BUT...
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO PROVE, WIZ? I CAN REACH EITHER ONE OF THOSE WARPS BEFORE YOU CAN!

TRUE, BUT WHICHEVER ONE YOU HEAD FOR, YOU'LL GIVE ME TIME TO DISAPPEAR THROUGH THE OTHER! IN OTHER WORDS IT'S A STAND OFF!
ULP! HE'S RIGHT!

HA! AND I CAN WAIT ALL DAY! YOU CAN'T-- NOT IF YOU WANT TO SAVE YOUR FLEET-FOOTED FELLOW AGENT!
UH-OH! NOW WHAT?!


BUT LIGHTNING'S LIFE DEPENDS NOT ONLY ON DYNAMITE'S DILEMMA...
LOOKS LIKE WE'VE LOST THE BATTLE! TIME IS RUNNING OUT AND...
HEY! I'VE FOUND IT! IF WE CAN INCREASE THE DENSITY OF HIS CELLS...

BUT IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT! THERE'S NO TIME LEFT TO FIND A WAY OF DOING...
NO! WAIT! THERE IS A WAY! DYNAMO'S BELT!

THERE! IT'S COMPLETELY RE-CYCLED TO GUY'S METABOLISM! NOW, EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON THE SQUAD! AND THEY'D BETTER ACT FAST! TIME IS JUST ABOUT UP!

THE SAME THOUGHT HAS OCCURRED ELSEWHERE...
I MUST MAKE MY MOVE! IT'S NOW OR NEVER!

AND THEN...
HA! SO LONG, SUCKER!
...I MUST CATCH HIM... FOR GUY'S SAKE!

BUT...
OH NO! I MISSED! CAN'T LET IT END THIS WAY! CAN'T!

...IF ONLY...HEY! WHAT'S THAT?

LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THE WARP-TRAVEL BELTS ...IT MAY ALLOW ME TO PASS THROUGH THE WIZARD'S WARP! OR IT MAY BE AN EXPLOSIVE FAKE, LIKE THE ONE THE WIZARD ONCE PALMED OFF ON GUY...

I HAVE NO CHOICE! I MUST CHANCE IT... NOW!...BEFORE THE WARP ENTRANCE FADES!!... OH WELL, HERE GOES...

MEANWHILE...
I'VE DONE IT- PERPETRATED 47 SUCCESSFUL ROBBERIES AND HAD MY REVENGE ON OL' SWIFT-SOCKS, TO BOOT!

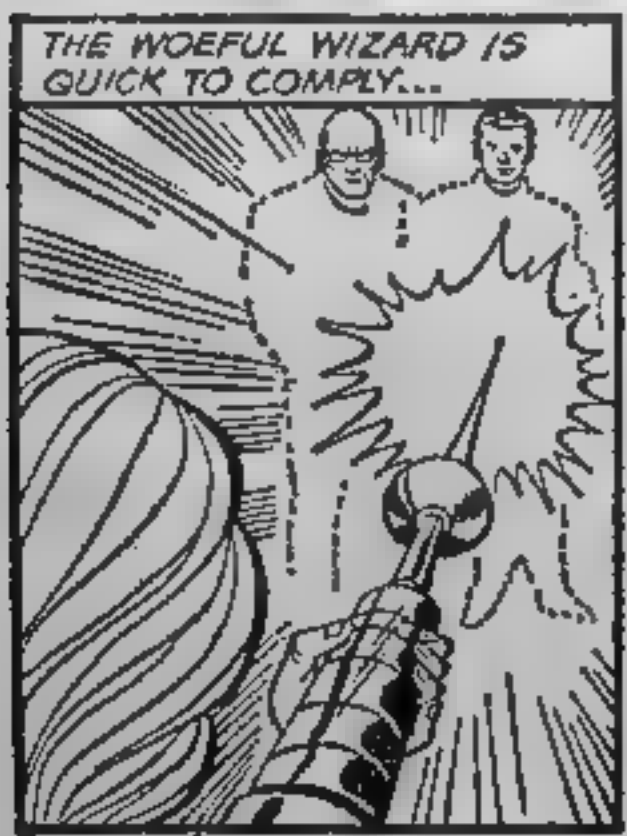
DYNAMITE'S GAMBLE PAYS OFF...
NO! IT CAN'T B... UH!
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MY BORROWING YOUR BELT! HERE'S ONE OF MINE IN RETURN!

NOW TELL ME - WHERE IS GUY?
NO! YOU MAY HAVE CAPTURED ME! BUT YOU WON'T CHEAT ME OUT OF MY REVENGE!

IF LIGHTNING DIES YOU'LL FACE A MURDER RAP!
OKAY! YOU WIN!

HE'S ON A DESERTED PLATEAU IN PERU! BUT A LOT OF GOOD THAT INFO WILL DO YOU! YOU'LL NEVER REACH HIM IN TIME!
DON'T BET ON IT! NOW TRANSPORT ME BACK TO THUNDER HEAD-QUARTERS-IMMEDIATELY!

IT MAY BE TOO LATE, BUT THERE'S STILL A CHANCE!
ALL RIGHT, WIZARD! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO-- AND DO IT NOW!


THE WOEFUL WIZARD IS QUICK TO COMPLY...

AND WITHIN MERE MICRO-SECONDS...
THERE HE IS!
QUICK! WHILE I READY THE BELT YOU BRING HIM OUT OF SUSPENSION! AND THEN... START PRAYING!

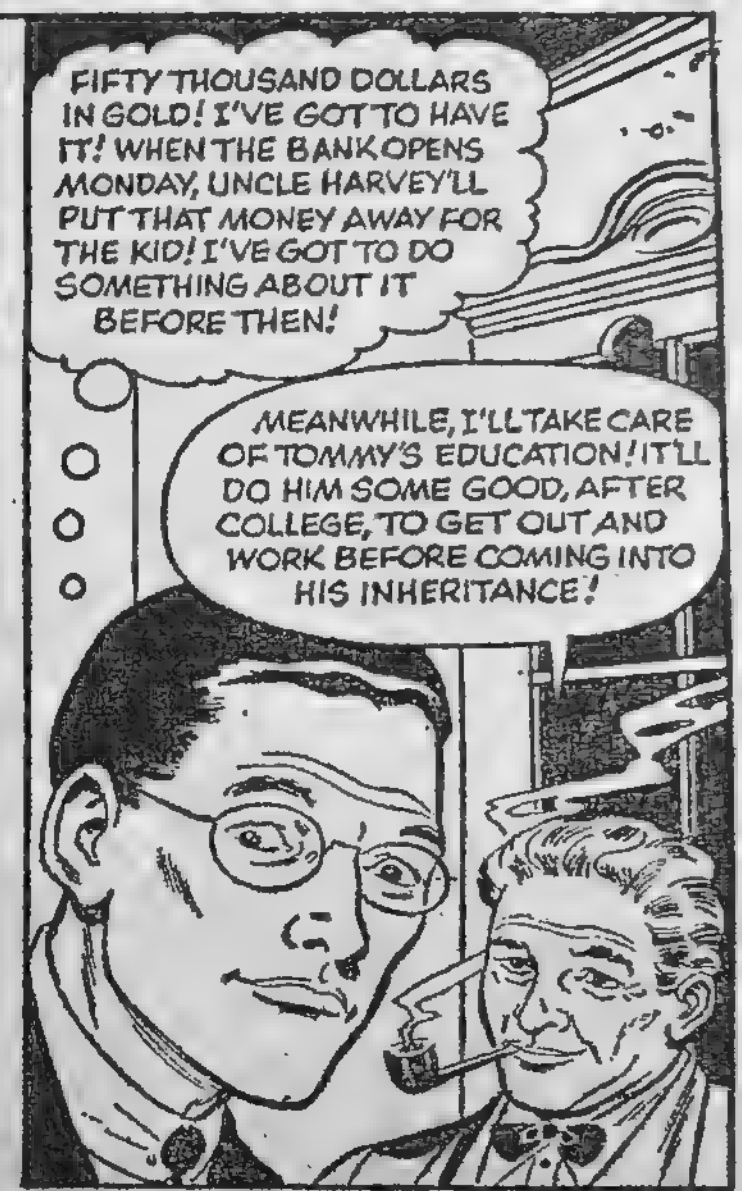
WHILE BACK AT HQ, THE PASSING SECONDS SEEM LIKE YEARS...
I'M WARNING YOU WIZARD! IF GUY DOESN'T PULL THROUGH...
EASY, JOHN! DON'T BLOW YOUR COOL!

THEN FINALLY...
DOCTOR, WE MUST KNOW! DID...?
IT WORKED! HE'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT!
WHEW... THANK HEAVEN!

LATER...
...SO THE WIZARD'S BACK IN STIR... AND THE DOCTORS SAY YOU'LL BE ABLE TO USE YOUR INDUCER AGAIN WITHIN A WEEK!
HOW CAN I EVER REPAY YOU GUYS! YOU SAVED MY LIFE!
DON'T BE SILLY! YOU'VE SAVED OURS COUNTLESS TIMES!
IT'S ALL PART OF OUR JOB!
THE END

THE UNKNOWN MAN WHO SUDDENLY APPEARED AT THE DINNER TABLE PROVED TO BE A STUMBLING BLOCK TO SETH WYLIE'S THIEVING SCHEME! AND JUSTICE TOOK A FANTASTIC TURN WHEN SETH MADE THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER HIS PARTNER-IN-CRIME!

the EMPTY CHAIR



TEN-YEAR-OLD TOMMY HOLT WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO NOTICED HIS COUSIN'S GREEDY INTEREST IN THE CHEST OF GOLD...

YOUNG TOMMY OPENED HIS EYES, AND IN A MOMENT THEY WERE FILLED WITH AMAZEMENT...

TOMMY! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

THE CHAIR! L-LOOK AT THE EMPTY CHAIR!

ALL LOOKED AT THE STRANGER WITH ASTONISHMENT! HE SMILED!

W-WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? WHO ARE YOU?

MY NAME DOESN'T REALLY MATTER! WHERE I COME FROM, AH! THAT IS THE STRANGE THING! WHAT YEAR IS THIS, PLEASE?

IT'S 1956, OF COURSE! BUT I DON'T SEE WHAT THAT'S GOT TO DO WITH IT!

I'VE JUST COME FROM 1976! NOT THAT I WANTED TO! A VOICE CALLED ME! I WAS IRRESISTIBLY DRAWN BACK THRU THE DIMENSIONS OF TIME BY THAT VOICE! HERE I AM, AND THAT'S ALL I CAN TELL ABOUT IT!

THEY LISTENED WITH GREAT INTEREST TO THE STRANGER'S ACCOUNT OF THE NEXT TWO DECADES! THEY COULDN'T STOP MARVELING AT HIS PRESENCE AMONG THEM...

WILL YOU BE AROUND TOMORROW?

I CAN'T SAY FOR SURE, TOMMY! I HOPE SO! RUN ALONG TO BED! IF I AM STILL AROUND, THERE ARE MANY THINGS WE CAN TALK ABOUT!

THE HOLTS FOUND THEMSELVES LIKING AND TRUSTING THE STRANGER! NEVERTHELESS, HARVEY HOLT TOOK THE PRECAUTION OF LOCKING THE CHEST OF GOLD IN A CLOSET! BUT IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING...

UNCLE HARVEY IS A FOOL! EVERY CLOSET IN THE HOUSE HAS THE SAME KEY!

WHAT? HOW'D YOU GET OUT HERE! I JUST SAW YOU ASLEEP IN THE GUEST ROOM UPSTAIRS!

I'M HERE, SETH WYLIE! THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS! NOW, I SUGGEST YOU TURN AROUND AND PUT THAT CHEST BACK WHERE YOU GOT IT!

THE STRANGER WATCHED SETH PUT THE GOLD BACK INTO THE CLOSET AND RETURN TO HIS DOWNSTAIRS BEDROOM! SETH, TREMBLING WITH RAGE, WAITED ANOTHER HOUR BEFORE HAVING ANOTHER TRY AT IT...

HE'S NOT HERE! NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW! BY THE TIME THEY FIND OUT, I'LL BE WELL ON MY WAY OUT OF THE COUNTRY!

SETH WYLIE'S CONFIDENCE GREW AS HE REACHED THE BUS DEPOT! HE WAS A LITTLE TOO SURE OF HIMSELF!
ONE-WAY TICKET TO MONTREAL!

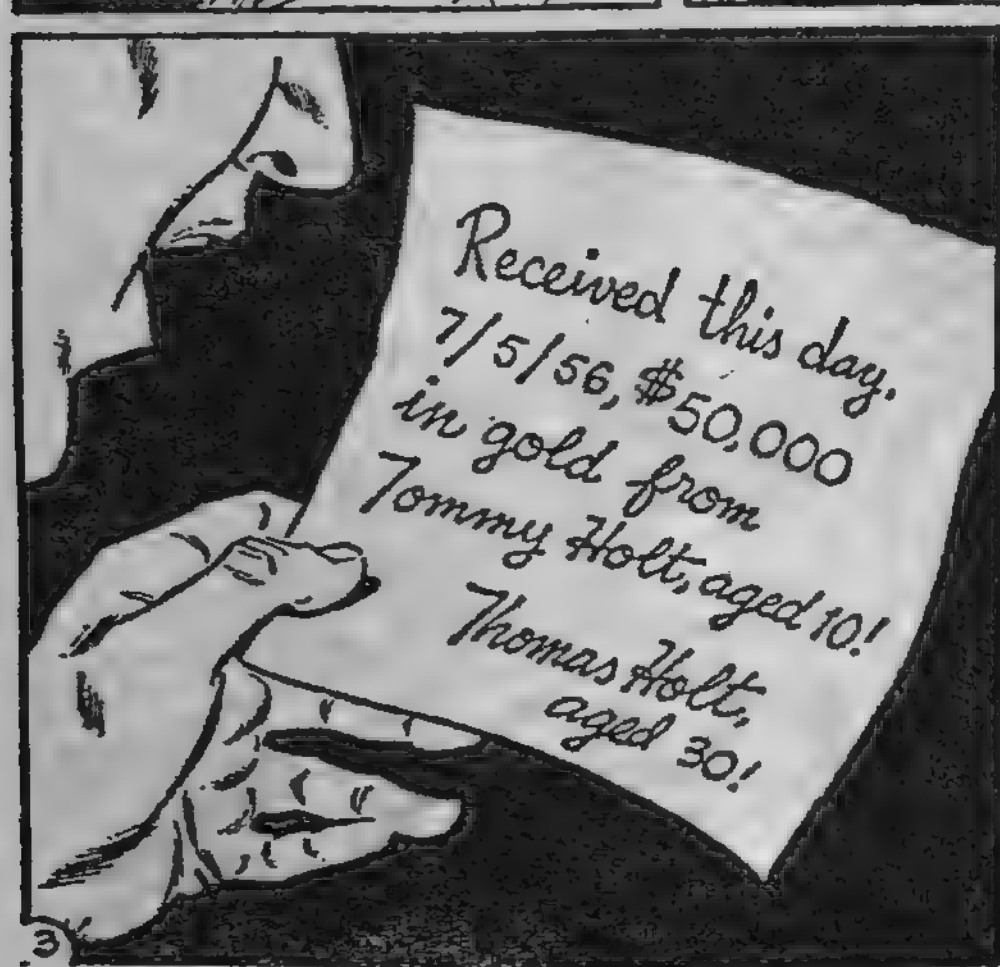
THE CHEST GONE! OH, THAT MEDDLER! WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE TO HIM WHO HAS THE GOLD?

SETH MADE NO FURTHER ATTEMPTS TO GET THE GOLD TILL LATE THE NEXT DAY! IN DESPERATION, HE APPROACHED THE STRANGER...
THINK OF IT, YOU'D GET TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS IN GOLD, JUST FOR TAKING THE CHEST INTO THE FUTURE WITH YOU! THE OTHER TWENTY-FIVE YOU'D BANK FOR ME!
I SEE YOU'D RATHER HAVE HALF THE GOLD IN TWENTY YEARS, THAN NOTHING IN THE PRESENT!

THAT'S IT EXACTLY! WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY?
ALL RIGHT, SETH! BUT YOU'D BETTER HURRY! I'VE GOT THAT FEELING AGAIN...I'M BEING DRAWN BACK... BACK TO MY OWN TIME!

SETH WASTED NO TIME BRINGING THE GOLD FROM ITS CLOSET HIDING PLACE...
WAIT! BEFORE I TURN THIS OVER TO YOU...I WANT A RECEIPT FOR IT!
OF COURSE! THEN YOU'D HAVE SOME HOLD ON ME, EVEN IF YOU HAVE TO WAIT TWENTY YEARS TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT! FAIR ENOUGH!

THE STRANGER WROTE THE RECEIPT, THEN VANISHED WITH THE GOLD AS SUDDENLY AS HE'D APPEARED!
TOMMY! WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? WHY THE BIG GRIN?
YOU'D BETTER HAVE A LOOK AT THAT PAPER YOU'RE HOLDING!


Received this day, 7/5/56, $50,000 in gold from Tommy Holt, aged 10!
Thomas Holt, aged 30!

NOW SETH KNEW THE STRANGER'S SECRET! THE MAN FROM 1976 WAS TOMMY HOLT HIMSELF, TWENTY YEARS IN THE FUTURE...
Y-YOU KNEW IT! YOU KNEW IT ALL THE TIME!
THE END

HE WAS A NO-GOOD, SHIFTLESS BUM WHO HAD NEVER HELD A JOB! A SORRY SPECIMEN WHO HAD ABSORBED MANY SNEERS AND WISECRACKS AND DIRTY LOOKS IN HIS LIFETIME! AND **THIS** WAS THE ONE MAN WHO, IN A FEW MOMENTS' TIME, WOULD HOLD ALL MANKIND'S FATE IN THE GRASP OF HIS HAND!

THEY CRAWL BY NIGHT!

HIS NAME WAS **ED PAULEY!** HE WAS DRIFTING ALONG AS ALWAYS, TELLING HIMSELF THAT HIS SQUALID EXISTENCE ON SOCIETY'S OUTERMOST FRINGE WAS FAR PREFERABLE TO ANYTHING THAT SMACKED OF RESPONSIBILITY!

FOR AS A BOY, HE HAD WATCHED AS HIS FATHER'S HEALTH HAD CRUMBLED UNDER THE PRESSURES OF A RESPONSIBLE EXECUTIVE POSITION!

HIS FATHER'S FATE HAD LEFT HIM WITH A FEAR OF JOBS AND RESPONSIBILITY, SO HE HAD DECIDED TO BECOME A HOBO...

AND SO HE HAD GROWN OLDER... ALWAYS DRIFTING, ALWAYS BEING DRIVEN ON BY THOSE WHO WORKED FOR A LIVING...

AND NOW HE WAS SHUFFLING ACROSS A SHADOWY FIELD IN THE MOONLIGHT, COMING CLOSER TO THE SPOT UNDER WHICH *THOSE WHO CRAWL* LAY GASPING IN THE DARKNESS... CLOSER... *CLOSER!*

WHEN HE NEXT OPENED HIS EYES...

FATE HAS SENT YOU TO US! AND NOW FATE DECREES THAT YOU SHOULD WIDEN THE HOLE THRU THE CRUST... AND GUIDE US, ONCE WE REACH THE SURFACE!
B-BUT WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO UP THERE?

TOO LONG HAVE WE LIVED IN THE DARKNESS, WHILE YOUR FELLOW SURFACE-BEINGS HAVE ENJOYED THE LIGHT!
NOW IT IS OUR TURN TO BASK IN THE SUN'S GLOW!

THEY'RE RIGHT! IT'S LIKE FATE MADE ME FALL THRU THE CRUST! IF THERE'S ANYBODY WHO'S BEEN ACHING TO GET BACK AT EVERY LAST SNOOTY JOB-HOLDER... IT'S ME!

BUT COULD I DO IT? AFTER ALL, PEOPLE ARE CLOSER TO ME THAN THESE "CRAWLERS"!
THE SURFACE-BEING WAVERS! WE MUST PERSUADE HIM!

HEAR THIS... LEAD US TO THE SURFACE NOT AS A MERE GUIDE, BUT AS OUR LEADER! LEAD US... AND NO BEING UNDER THE SUN SHALL BE MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU!

HE PONDERS OUR OFFER!
HE MUST LEAD US! HE IS OUR ONLY CHANCE! WE ARE TOO WEAK TO CRAWL UP BY OURSELVES!

HE RISES! HE HAS COME TO A DECISION!
HE BECKONS US TO FOLLOW HIM UP!

AND SO THOSE WHO CRAWL, WERE SEALED UP FOREVER! AND ED PAULEY WAS DRIFTING ALONG AGAIN...

THAT'S WHAT HE TRIED TO TELL HIMSELF AT FIRST...THAT WHAT HE HAD DONE HAD NOTHING WHATSOEVER TO DO WITH HAVING BEEN UNABLE TO BETRAY HIS FELLOW MEN! BUT IF THAT WERE TRUE...WHY, AS HE WALKED, WERE HIS SHOULDERS SQUARING? WHY WAS HE STRIDING SO PURPOSEFULLY? WHY WERE HIS EYES SHINING WITH A NEWBORN SELF-RESPECT?

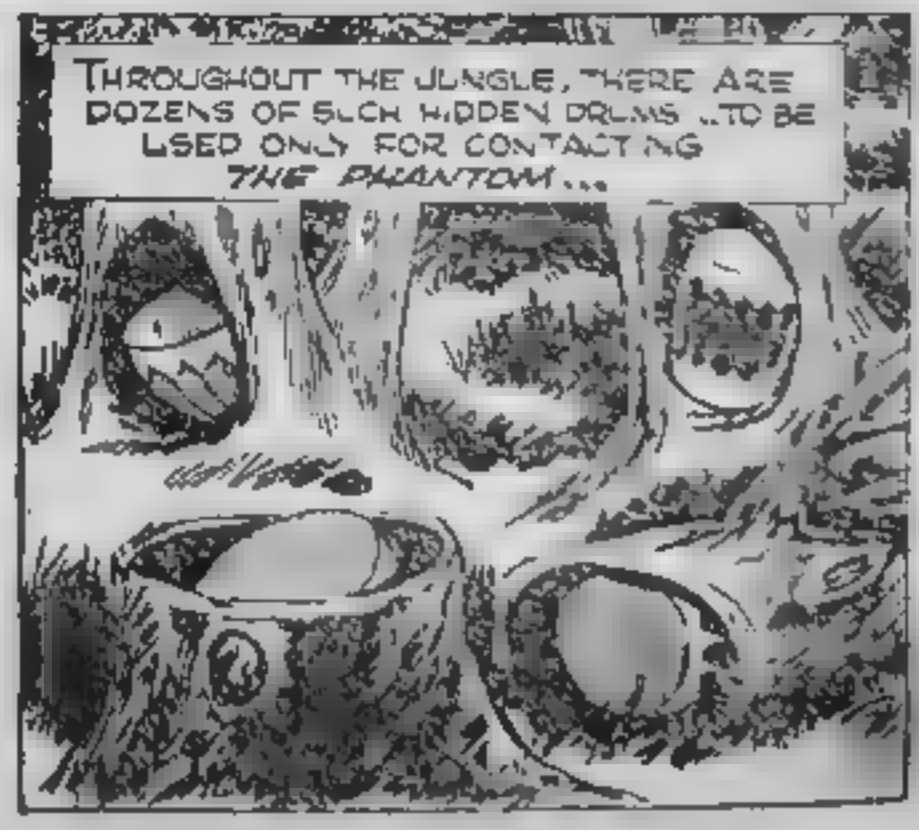
THE PHANTOM

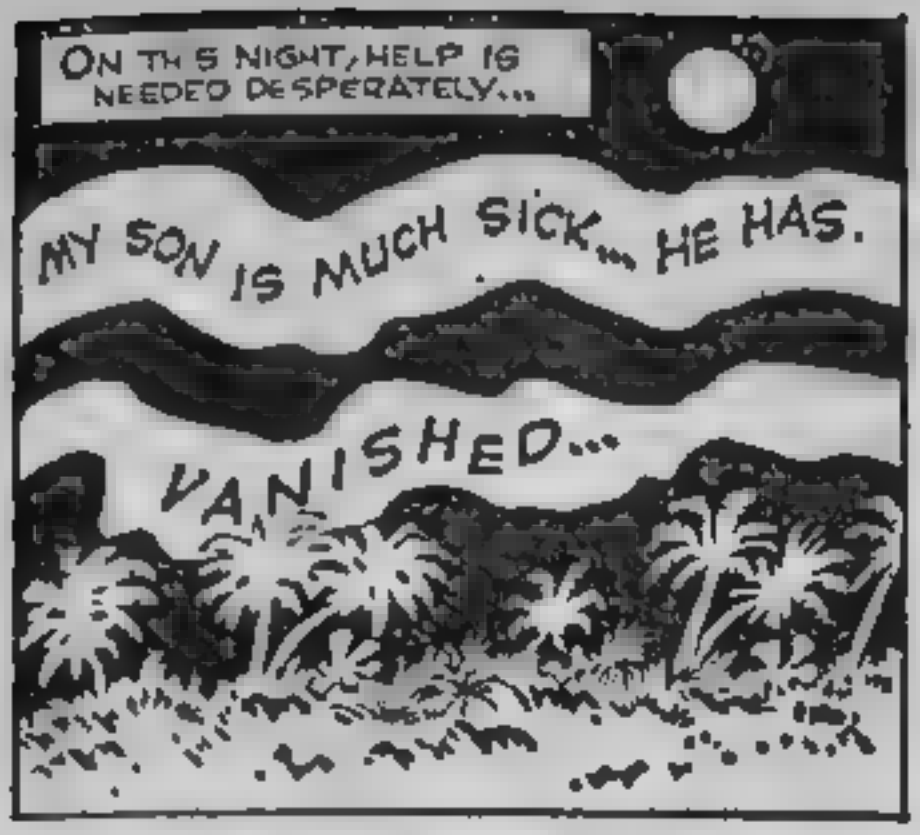
BOOM-BOOM-BOOM-BOOM-BOOM-

SOS PHANTOM

IN ALL PARTS OF THE JUNGLE, NATIVES KNOW THAT WHEN THEY NEED H.S HELP, *THE PHANTOM* WILL COME. SOMETIMES THE R CALLS FOR H.S HELP COME IN THE BEAT OF A JUNGLE DRUM...

THE DRUMS ARE CALLING US, DEVIL!




ON THIS NIGHT, HELP IS NEEDED DESPERATELY...
MY SON IS MUCH SICK... HE HAS.
VANISHED...

AND AS THE DIRE CALL FOR HELP CONTINUES...
THREE SUNS AGO, A GREAT LEOPARD HUNT...

"MY SON WAS NEW...TO THE HUNT... CARELESS...THE ANIMAL SPRANG..."

MY SPEAR LASHED OUT ONCE...TWICE... THREE TIMES... FINALLY HE FLED..."

"... BUT MY SON LAY UPON THE GROUND... SCARRED BY THE LEOPARD'S TALONS... I PICKED HIM UP GENTLY AND CARRIED HIM BACK TO OUR VILLAGE..."

"FOR MANY HOURS HE LAY MOAN NG. OUR DOCTOR COULD NOT BRING THE LIGHT BACK TO HIS EYES... AND *THEN*..."
COME BACK! RETURN TO YOUR SICK COUCH!

BOOM-BOOM... TOO FAST TO FOLLOW... HE FLED THE JUNGLE... TOWARD THE GREAT SWAMP... WE CAN NOT FIND HIM...
DELIRIOUS! HIS WOUNDS HAVE BECOME INFECTED AND FEVERED THE POOR BOY'S MIND. WE'VE GOT TO MOVE QUICKLY, DEVIL.

SOON, THE PHANTOM HEADS FAR INTO THE JUNGLE - TOWARD THE GREAT SWAMP...
JUNGLE FEVER CAN DO *STRANGE* THINGS! HE MUST BE FOUND BEFORE HE DIES OF HIS SICKNESS!

FINALLY...
GOOD WORK, DEVIL! YOU'VE FOUND THE TRAIL!

AND A HALF MILE DEEPER IN THE SWAMP...
A CROCODILE! IT'S GOT THE BOY TREED!

THE GHOST WHO WALKS SPRINGS WITH POWERFUL ARMS OUTSTRETCHED...
CAN'T RISK USING MY GUN...IN HIS DELIRIOUS CONDITION THE BOY MIGHT SPRING INTO THE LINE OF FIRE.

MIGHTY PHANTOM SINEWS TIGHTEN...THE CREATURE IS CRUSHED LIKE A BAMBOO STALK...

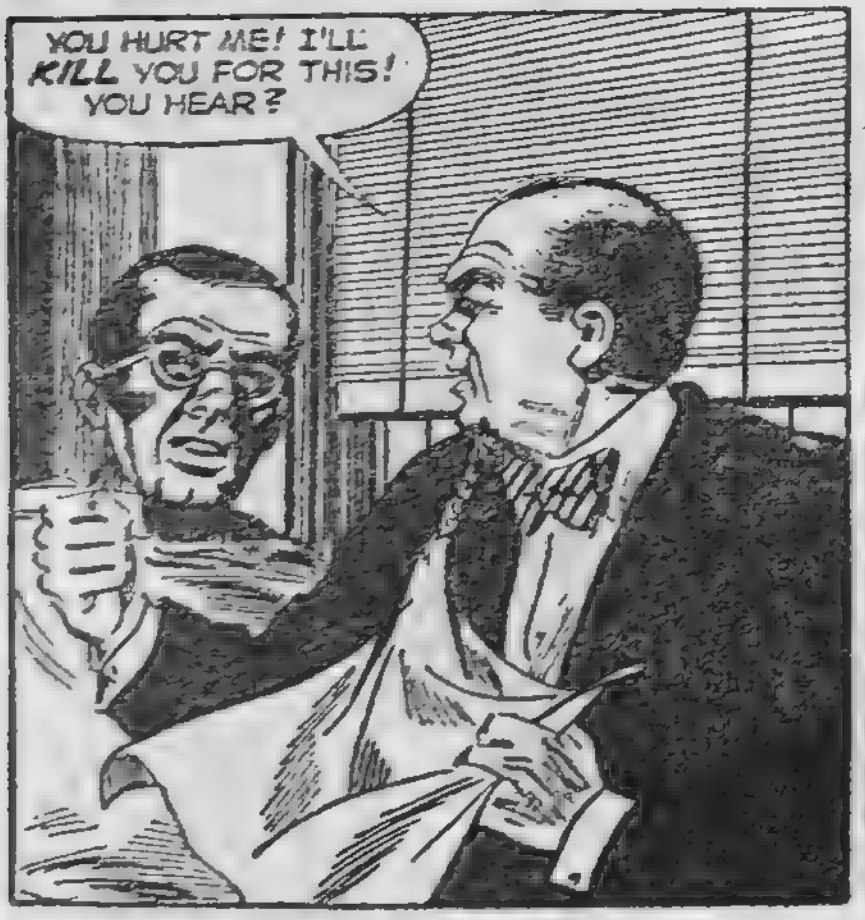
...AND HURLED INTO A WATERY GRAVE.

AND LATER, IN TOWN...
HE'S COMING ALONG FINE, PHANTOM! BY TOMORROW HE'LL BE READY TO GO HOME.
THANKS TO YOU, OH GHOST WHO WALKS.

HOW CAN I THANK THE GHOST WHO WALKS FOR SAVING MY SON'S LIFE?
THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY—BY USING THE SECRET DRUMS WHENEVER YOUR TRIBESPEOPLE NEED MY HELP. I SHALL ALWAYS BE WAITING!
YES, THE SECRET MESSAGE DRUMS WILL ALWAYS BE WAITING WHEN JUNGLE PEOPLE ARE IN TROUBLE!

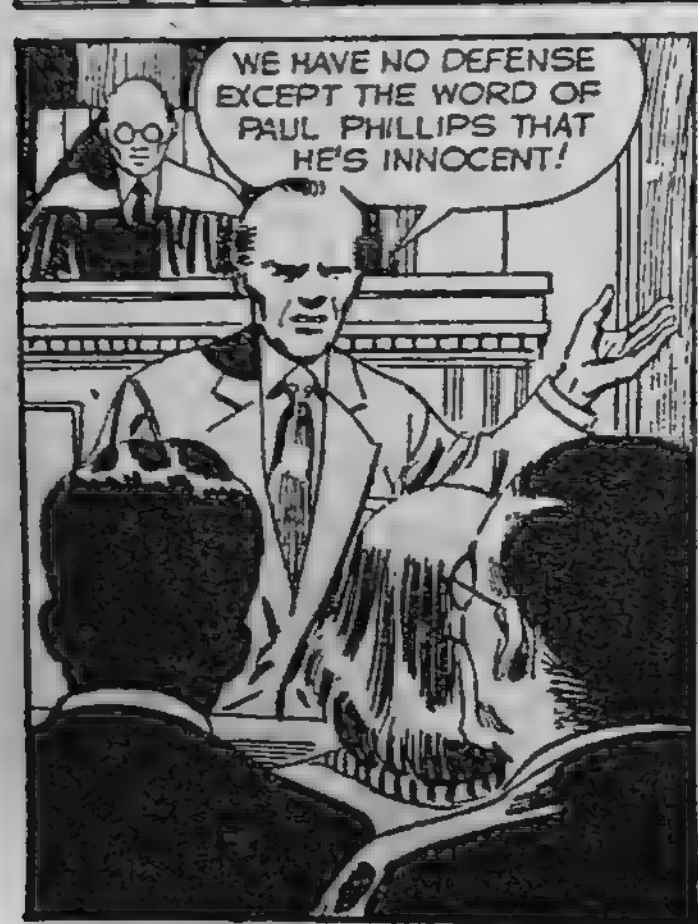
HE KNEW ALL THE ANSWERS... AND ONE ANSWER HE KNEW FOR SURE WAS THAT WHEN AN ACCUSED MAN WAS SURROUNDED WITH THE EVIDENCE OF A MURDER, THAT MAN WAS GUILTY, EVEN IF THE EVIDENCE WAS CIRCUMSTANTIAL! AND... *HE* WAS THE PROSECUTOR IN CHARGE OF THE CASE AGAINST A MAN THAT EVERYONE THOUGHT INNOCENT EXCEPT HIMSELF! WHERE, IF THE ACCUSED MAN *WAS* INNOCENT, WAS..

The PUNISHMENT of Paul Phillips!



AND WITH THOSE WORDS, PAUL PHILLIPS RUSHED HOME! THE PAIN WAS GONE, STRANGELY ENOUGH, SO, THE NEXT MORNING...

BUT PAUL PHILLIPS WAS NEVERTHELESS ARRESTED AND TRIED FOR THE MURDER OF DR. GRIMES!



THE JURY DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO REACH A VERDICT!

THE JUDGE PASSED THE SENTENCE...

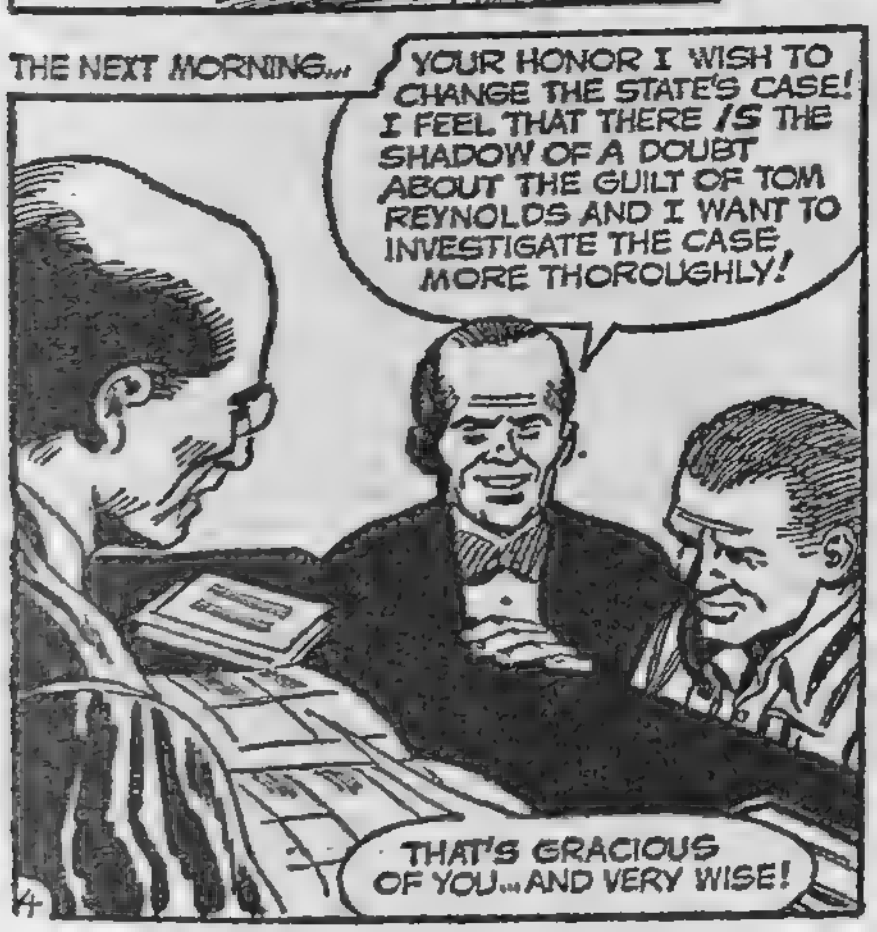
AND THEN...
GAS CHAMBER
I DIDN'T DO IT! IT'S ALL CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE! IT'S NOT TRUE!

THE GAS POURED INTO THE CHAMBER...
NO! WAIT! INVESTIGATE FURTHER! YOU'RE MAKING A MISTAKE! THE GUILTY MAN'S GETTING AWAY! DON'T DO IT...

IT'S DONE, PHILLIPS!

YOU MEAN IT WAS ALL A DREAM?
YOU MEAN YOU DREAMED? PEOPLE UNDERGO SOME STRANGE REACTIONS UNDER GAS! WHAT DID YOU DREAM?

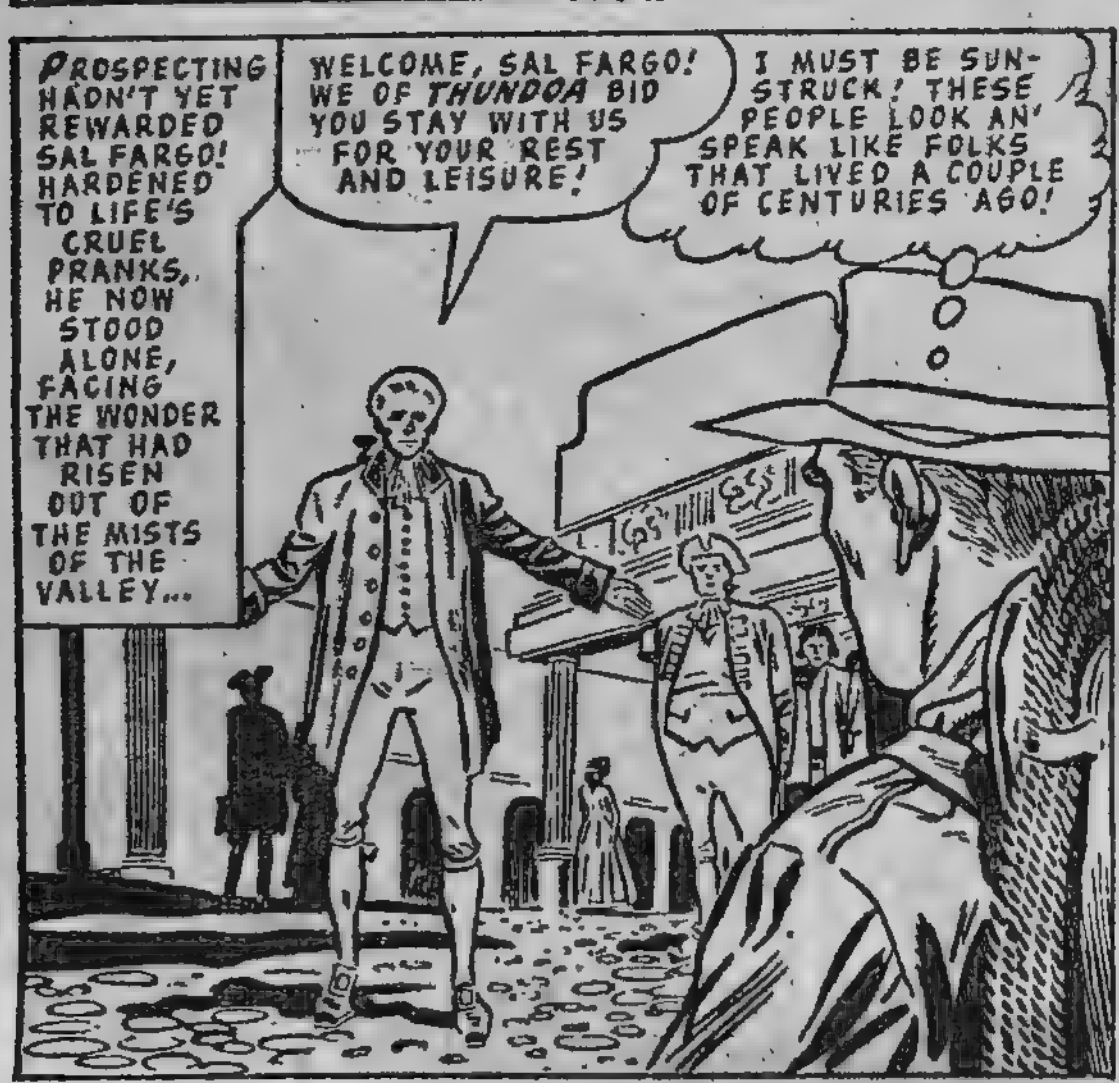
PLENTY! THANKS, DOC!


THE NEXT MORNING...
YOUR HONOR I WISH TO CHANGE THE STATE'S CASE! I FEEL THAT THERE IS THE SHADOW OF A DOUBT ABOUT THE GUILT OF TOM REYNOLDS AND I WANT TO INVESTIGATE THE CASE MORE THOROUGHLY!
THAT'S GRACIOUS OF YOU... AND VERY WISE!

THANKS, MR. PHILLIPS! YOU SAVED ME FROM BEING PUNISHED FOR A CRIME I DIDN'T COMMIT!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL! I CAME CLOSE TO BEING PUNISHED MYSELF FOR BELIEVING THAT CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE WAS ENOUGH TO EXECUTE A MAN! NEVER AGAIN! NEVER AGAIN!
THE END

THE TOWN ROSE OUT OF THE VALLEY...SHINING, ALIVE...BECKONING TO SAL FARGO FROM THE PAST, PROMISING HIM THE MIDAS TOUCH, IN RETURN FOR...

SOMETHING STRANGE ON THE SAND!



THE ELDER GUIDED THE BURLY PROSPECTOR THROUGH THE STRANGE STREETS OF THE SHIMMERING TOWN...

KNOW YOU THAT ALL MYSTERIES OF NATURE ARE CLEAR TO US! HERE IN *THUNDOA, TIME* STANDS STILL, FOR WE HAVE THE POWER TO LIVE NORMALLY AS OTHERS FOR JUST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, ONCE EACH YEAR!

BUT WHY? HOW?

A GREAT *TREASURE* ENABLES US TO APPEAR AT WILL TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD! WE THUS ELECT TO LIVE IN HAPPINESS AND PEACE *AWAY* FROM THE DAILY TROUBLES OF YOUR WORLD!

A TREASURE, YOU SAY? AND YOU'RE *TELLING ME* ABOUT IT ...A STRANGER YOU HAVEN'T EVEN SEEN BEFORE?

IT IS *THUNDOA'S* LAW TO TELL EVERY STRANGER WHOM DESTINY BRINGS HERE, OF OUR TREASURE! THEN HE MAY SPIN HIS OWN WEB IN THE *SPOOL OF TIME!*

I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOUR CRAZY TALK, BUT I KNOW THAT THIS COUNTER OF MINE IS GOING HAYWIRE!

BEHOLD!

URANIUM! A SOLID LUMP OF IT WORTH MILLIONS!

AND MOMENTS LATER, WHEN HE WAS LED AWAY FROM THE PURE LUMP OF RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCE THAT HAD ALMOST BLINDED HIM...

AND NOW YOU HAVE SEEN! IT IS FOR *YOU* TO DECIDE!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

THE MYSTERIOUS ELDER GAVE HIM NO ANSWER, UNTIL MINUTES LATER, INSIDE A STRANGELY-SCENTED CHAMBER...

YOUR JOURNEY THROUGH UNCHARTED WASTELAND HAS BEEN A HARD ONE! HERE YOU WILL REST AND GIVE US YOUR DECISION BEFORE *MIDNIGHT!*

...WHETHER OR NOT I'LL *STAY* HERE WITH YOUR PEOPLE OR *GO?* IS THAT IT? OKAY... I'LL LET YOU KNOW!

THEN THE DOOR CLOSED AND SAL FARGO WAS ALONE...

SURE, I'LL LET THEM KNOW! THAT *URANIUM* IS GOING WITH *ME*... RIGHT *OUT* OF THIS VALLEY! AND *NO ONE* WILL STOP ME!

PLANNING HIS MOVES WELL, FARGO PUT HIS SCHEME INTO ACTION

MY UPPERCUT WILL KEEP HIM SLEEPING FOR A WHILE. LONG ENOUGH TO GET ME TO THE ELDER'S HOUSE!

MAKING HIS WAY TO THE ELDER'S QUARTERS DOWN AT THE END OF THE CORRIDOR THE DETERMINED MAN BEGAN HIS SEARCH.

THE KEY *HAS* TO BE HERE. I SAW HIM PUT THE WHOLE BUNCH OF KEYS IN HERE WHEN HE BROUGHT ME BACK FROM THE CAVE!

SUDDENLY..

YOU WILL NOT FIND THE KEYS THERE! NOR WAS IT NECESSARY TO BRING VIOLENCE TO *THUNDOA*, SAL FARGO!

WHAT!?

ALL RIGHT! LET'S NOT PLAY GAMES! YOU KNOW WHAT I'M AFTER! AND I WANT THEM NOW... *QUICK!*

THAT LOWER PANEL TO YOUR LEFT IS WHAT YOU SEEK! YOU HAVE JUST *THREE HOURS* BEFORE *THUNDOA* FADES AND THE CAVE CLOSES FROM ALL MORTAL EYES!

LEAVING THE OLD MAN IN HIS CHAMBER, FARGO RACED TOWARD THE DARK CAVE, AS THE FIRST OF THE THREE HOURS BONGED INTO EXISTENCE FROM THE TOWN'S BELL

NOT TRYING TO STOP ME WAS SMART OF HIM! MAYBE HE THINKS I WON'T BE ABLE TO USE THE *RIGHT* KEY! BUT I'LL SHOW HIM!

BONG! BONG! BONG!

AND WITHIN MINUTES.

RIGHT ON SCHEDULE! I WATCHED CAREFULLY WHAT KEY HE USED WHEN HE OPENED THIS DOOR THE *FIRST* TIME!

NOW I'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO OPEN THIS QUARTZ BARRIER! THEN I'LL PUT THE TREASURE IN MY LEAD-REINFORCED SACK AND GET OUT, BEFORE THIS CRAZY PLACE DISAPPEARS!

BUT AS TIME SPED BY...

I'M NOT LICKED YET! STILL GOT AN HOUR TO GET THIS THING OPEN! JUST A MATTER OF FINDING THE RIGHT KEY! THE TREASURE'S JUST A FEW FEET AWAY FROM ME... JUST A FEW FEET AWAY!

BONG!

BONG!

WORKING FRANTICALLY, SAL FARGO TRIED ONE KEY AFTER ANOTHER...

IT WON'T OPEN! I'VE TRIED NINETY-NINE KEYS! THERE'S JUST ONE LEFT! IT'S THE *LAST* KEY! I'VE FINALLY FOUND THE *RIGHT* ONE! JUST A TWIST OF THE LOCK, AND...

BONG!

RRRUMMBLE!!

THE CEILING... IT'S CAVING IN! TIME'S RUNNING OUT! BUT I'VE GOT THE *RIGHT KEY!* IT'LL ONLY TAKE A FEW SECONDS!

NO! I'LL *NEVER* MAKE IT! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! I'LL BE A DEAD MAN IF I STAY ANOTHER SECOND IN THIS PLACE!

USING ALL HIS STRENGTH, THE FRIGHTENED MAN RAN PAST THE TWISTING LABYRINTHS AND GLOOMY PASSAGEWAYS, AS THE RUMBLING OVERHEAD INCREASED IN FURY, UNTIL...

I'VE MADE IT! I COULDN'T GET THE TREASURE... BUT I'LL STAY HERE TILL I GET... ANOTHER CHANCE!

BUT AS FARGO'S EYES GREW ACCUSTOMED TO THE MISTY LIGHT OUTSIDE THE CAVE...

FAREWELL, FOOLISH MORTAL! YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE! I GAVE YOU THE KEYS WILLINGLY, HOPING YOU WOULD REALIZE THAT YOU WANTED NEITHER WEALTH NOR POWER, BUT PEACE OF MIND! BUT YOU BELONG TO *YOUR* WORLD, AND YOU WILL *NEVER SEE US AGAIN!*

NO! COME BACK! I'VE GOT THE *RIGHT KEY!* YOU *CAN'T* CHEAT ME OUT OF THE *TREASURE!*

AND SO, SAL FARGO WAS LEFT WITH JUST A RUSTED KEY AND A SHATTERED MEMORY OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN... IF HIS *GREED* HAD *NOT* GOTTEN THE BEST OF HIM!

THE *KEY... TREASURE* ... BELONGS TO *ME...* THE RIGHT KEY...

POOR OLD MAN! GOOD THING WE FOUND HIM WHEN WE DID! ALL HE DOES IS TALK ABOUT A LOST TREASURE! STRANGE WHAT TRICKS THE SUN CAN PLAY ON LOST PROSPECTORS!

THE END

SOMEONE HAD TO BRING KENYON IN TO STAND TRIAL FOR HIS CRIMES, BUT WHAT MERE HUMAN COULD HOPE TO OVERCOME...

THE MAN WHO CRUSHED ROCKS!

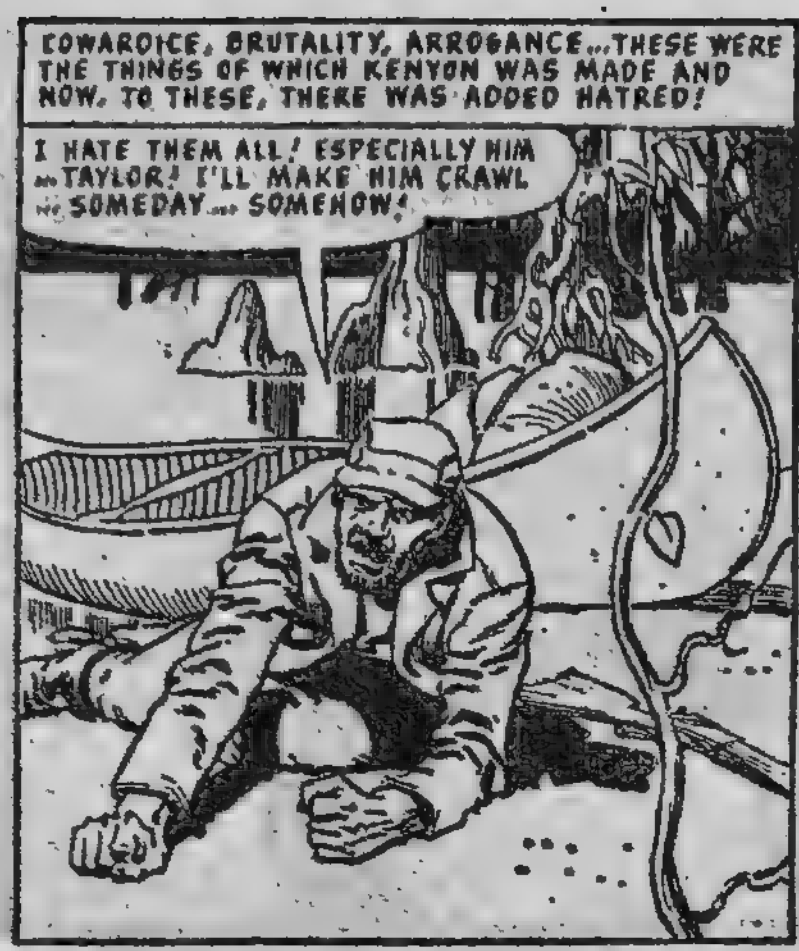
ALL RIGHT, KENYON! THERE'S YOUR CANOE AND THERE'S THE SWAMP! GET MOVING, AND DON'T COME BACK!

I'LL COME BACK, TAYLOR! NO ONE RUNS ME OUT OF A TOWN AND GETS AWAY WITH IT!

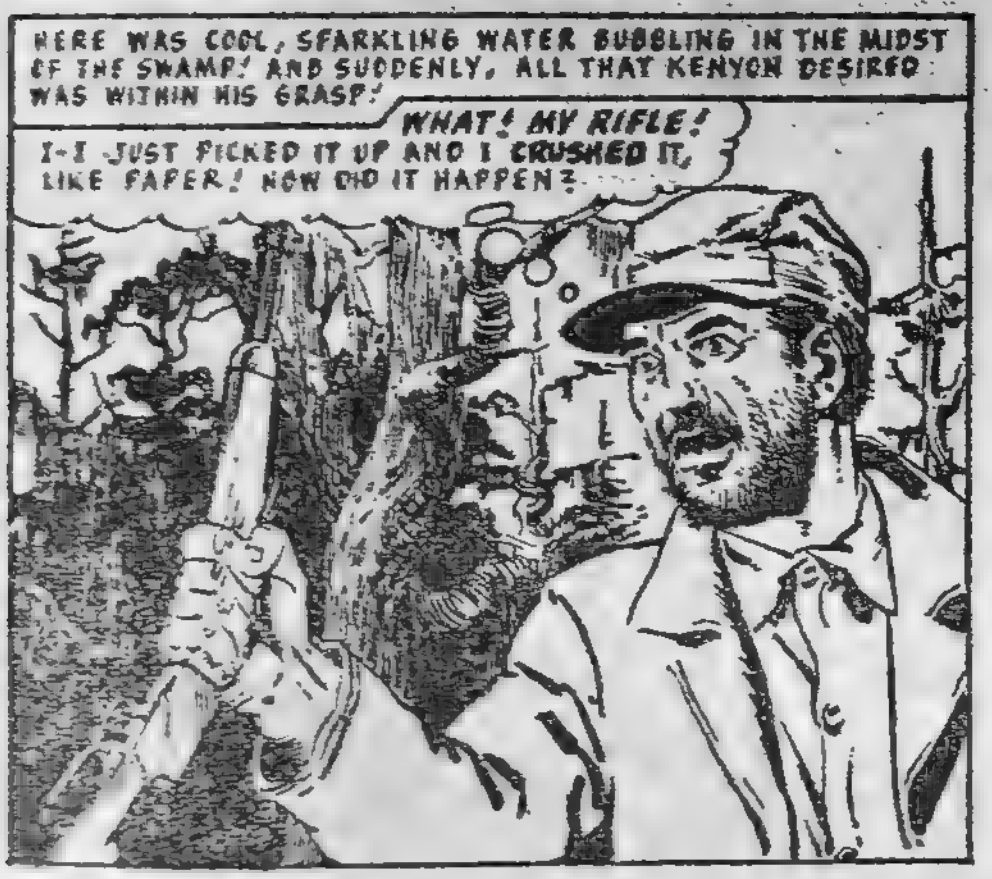
ONE OF THE STRANGEST TALES EVER TOLD!

KB34

PERHAPS IF KENYON HAD NOT BEEN WHAT HE WAS, IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT! IF HE HAD NOT BEEN A COWARD, HE MIGHT HAVE FOUGHT AT THE BEGINNING... BUT KENYON WAS A COWARD!


COWARDICE, BRUTALITY, ARROGANCE...THESE WERE THE THINGS OF WHICH KENYON WAS MADE AND NOW, TO THESE, THERE WAS ADDED HATRED!
I HATE THEM ALL! ESPECIALLY HIM ...TAYLOR! I'LL MAKE HIM CRAWL ...SOMEDAY... SOMEHOW!

AN OUTCAST, ALONE, KENYON WANDERED THE TREACHEROUS SWAMP FOR DAYS, WEEKS, AND THEN ONE DAY, HE FOUND THE SPRING!


HERE WAS COOL, SPARKLING WATER BUBBLING IN THE MIDST OF THE SWAMP! AND SUDDENLY, ALL THAT KENYON DESIRED WAS WITHIN HIS GRASP!
WHAT! MY RIFLE!
I-I JUST PICKED IT UP AND I CRUSHED IT, LIKE PAPER! HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

THAT ROCK! IF I CAN DO THE SAME WITH THAT...

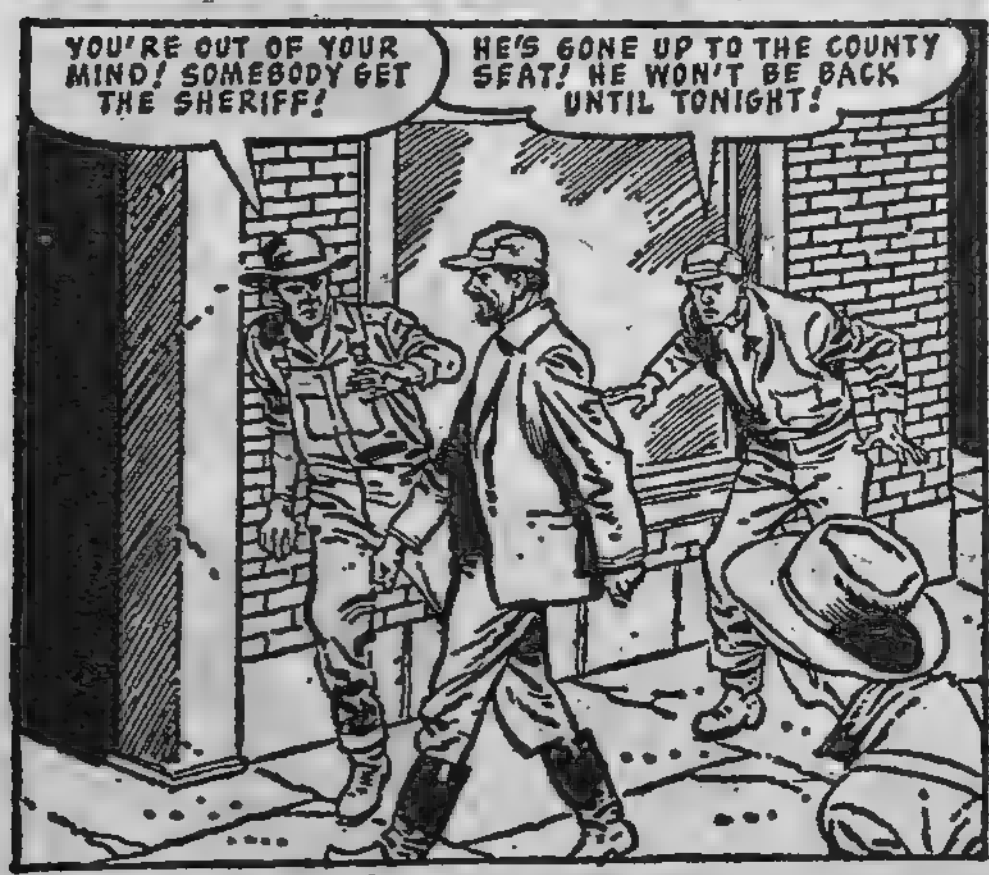
IT'S TRUE! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO ME! THE SPRING! SOMETHING IN IT —WHEN I DRANK— IT'S MADE ME AS STRONG AS AN ELEPHANT!
CRUNCH

I'M A STRONG-MAN! DO YOU HEAR THAT, TAYLOR? NOW YOU'LL SEE IF I PAY YOU BACK OR NOT!

HOW KENYON GLOATED, ANTICIPATING HIS REVENGE! NOW HE SHOUTED HIS DEFIANCE! AND SO, HE RETURNED OVER THE ROUTE HE HAD TAKEN INTO THE SWAMP!

THERE WERE LONG, WEARY MILES TO BE TRAVELED! BUT WHAT WAS THAT TO A STRONG-MAN? WHEN HE REACHED HIS JOURNEY'S END, HE WAS HAPPY!
ALL RIGHT, TAYLOR! NOW I'LL EVEN THINGS UP! AND WHILE I'M AT IT, SEEING THE BANK HAS GIVEN ME AN IDEA!

KENYON, WHAT ARE YOU DOING BACK HERE?
I JUST THOUGHT I'D STOP BACK AND VISIT THE BANK! I'M GOING TO ROB IT! WHY DON'T YOU COME ALONG AND WATCH?


YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND! SOMEBODY GET THE SHERIFF!
HE'S GONE UP TO THE COUNTY SEAT! HE WON'T BE BACK UNTIL TONIGHT!

THEN WE'LL HAVE TO HANDLE HIM! WE... OHH!
YOU WON'T HANDLE ANYONE!

KENYON, SO YOU CAME BACK! GET OUT OF HERE, THE BANK'S CLOSING!
THEN, I'M OPENING IT!

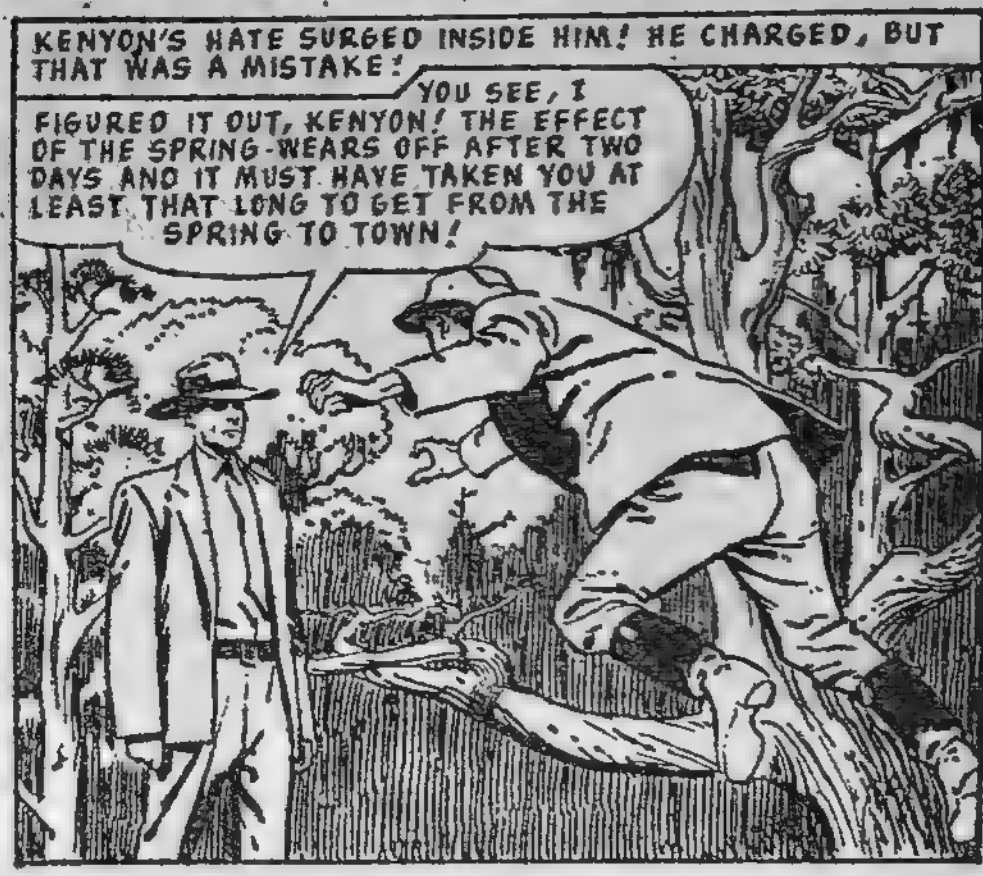
NO, IT'S NOT POSSIBE! HE RIPPED THE VAULT DOOR OFF ITS HINGES!
AND I CAN HANDLE THE WHOLE TOWN JUST AS EASILY! I'M TAKING THE CASH OUT OF THIS CRACKER BOX... ALL OF IT!

LOOT... AND REVENGE! KENYON HAD THE FIRST, THEN... BUT THE SECOND WAS STILL TO COME!
THERE! I'LL LEAVE YOU A NICE, CLEAR TRAIL TO FOLLOW, TAYLOR! AND I'LL BE WAITING FOR YOU AT THE END OF IT!

TAYLOR WOULD COME! KENYON KNEW THAT! SO LATER, HE WAITED! HE SLEPT, AND WITH THE DAWN, HIS CERTAINTY BORE FRUIT!
SO I WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU! YOU HAD TO COME AFTER ME, EVEN AFTER THEY TOLD YOU ABOUT ME!
ABOUT HOW STRONG YOU ARE? YES, THEY TOLD ME! BUT I'M NOT A HERO! I'M JUST DOING MY JOB!

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST!
YOU THINK YOU CAN ARREST ME? THAT'S GOOD! THAT'S... HA, HA, HO, HO!

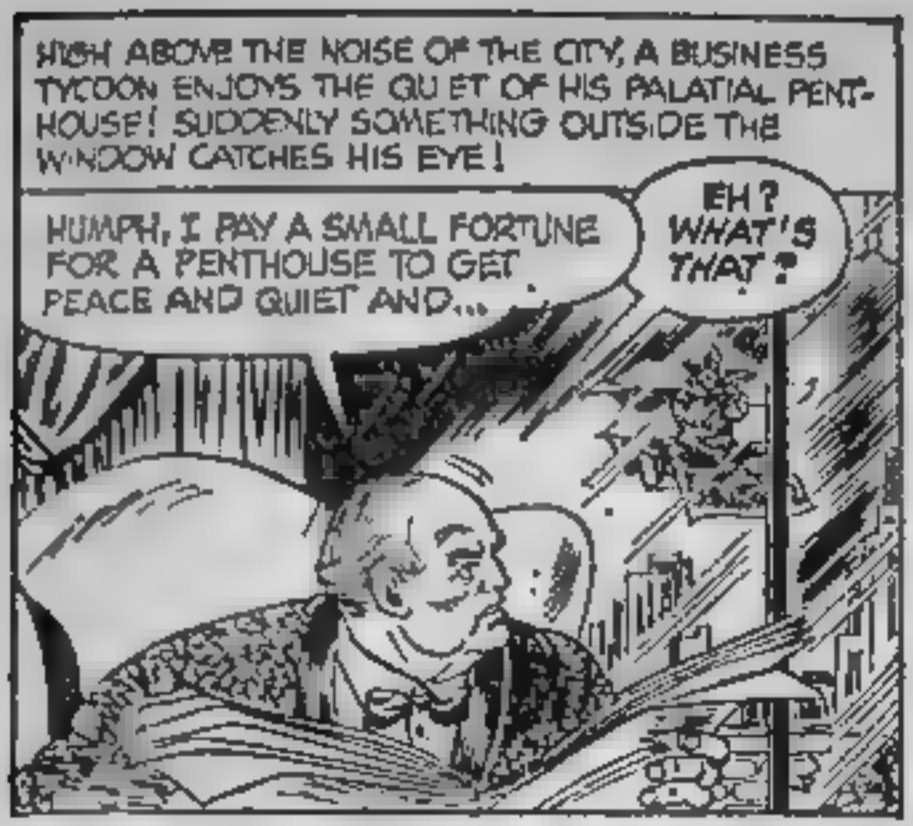
ALL RIGHT, HERO! I'VE HAD MY LAUGH! NOW, GET READY, BECAUSE I'M GOING TO FINISH YOU HERE AND NOW!
ARE YOU? I DON'T THINK SO!


KENYON'S HATE SURGED INSIDE HIM! HE CHARGED, BUT THAT WAS A MISTAKE!
YOU SEE, I FIGURED IT OUT, KENYON! THE EFFECT OF THE SPRING WEARS OFF AFTER TWO DAYS AND IT MUST HAVE TAKEN YOU AT LEAST THAT LONG TO GET FROM THE SPRING TO TOWN!

AT THE END, KENYON TRIED TO STOP HIS HEADLONG CHARGE, BUT IT WAS TOO LATE!
I KNOW, BECAUSE I FOUND THE SPRING TOO, LONG AGO! I KEPT IT A SECRET SO THAT MEN LIKE YOU WOULDN'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT!

IT WAS MUCH TOO LATE!
YOU SHOULD HAVE TAKEN MY ADVICE, AND NEVER COME BACK!
THE END

MANDRAKE
THE MAGICIAN
The FLYING PHANTOM!
GREAT GHOSTS! IT'S TRUE--THERE REALLY IS A FLYING HORSE!
MANDRAKE.. BE CAREFUL!
INCREDIBLE AS IT SEEMS, IT'S TRUE! AND EVEN MANDRAKE'S MIGHTY HYPNOTIC MAGIC WILL BE PUT TO THE ACID TEST TO STOP THE FANTASTIC PHANTOM RIDER!

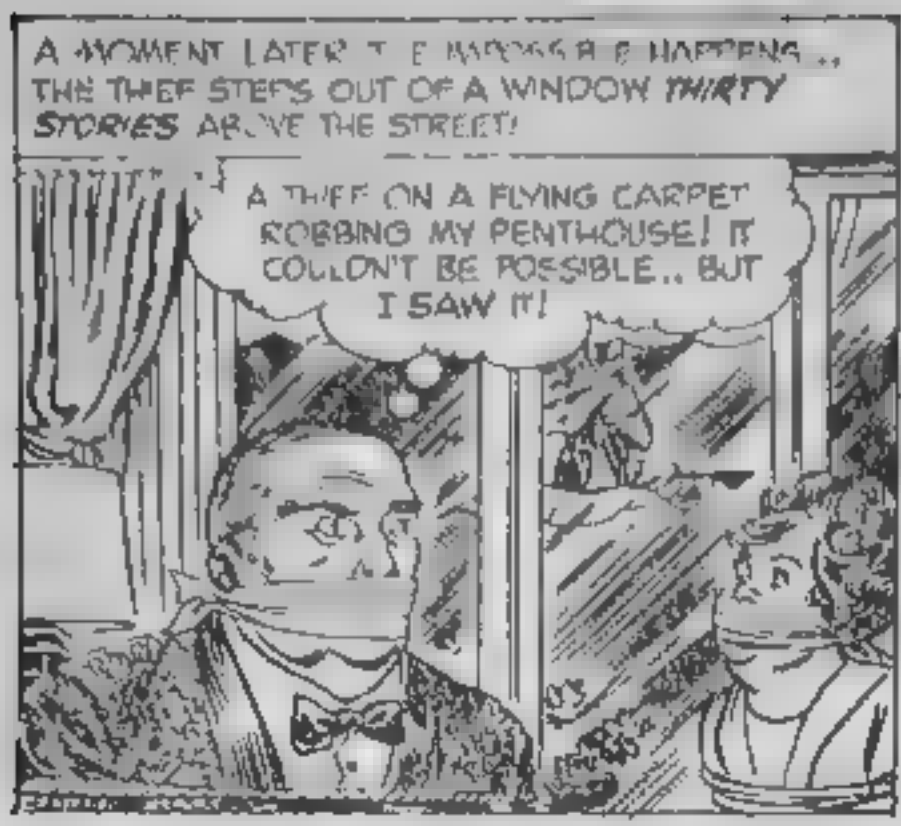

HIGH ABOVE THE NOISE OF THE CITY, A BUSINESS TYCOON ENJOYS THE QUIET OF HIS PALATIAL PENTHOUSE! SUDDENLY SOMETHING OUTSIDE THE WINDOW CATCHES HIS EYE!
HUMPH, I PAY A SMALL FORTUNE FOR A PENTHOUSE TO GET PEACE AND QUIET AND...
EH? WHAT'S THAT?

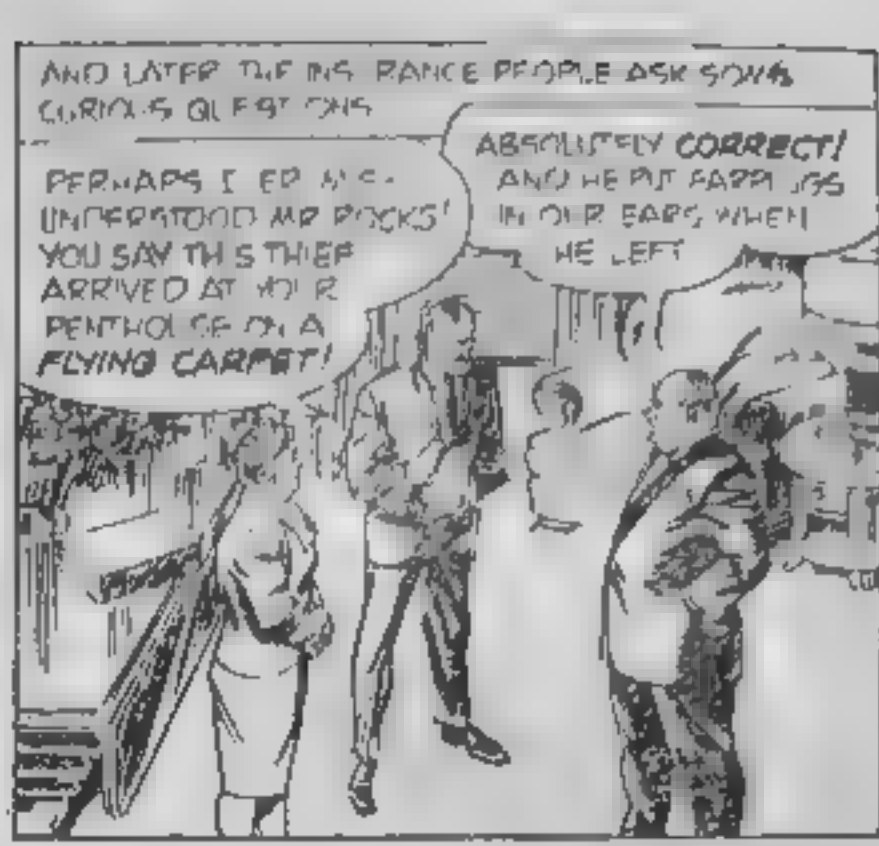
THUNDERATION! I-I MUST BE LOSING MY SANITY!

MY DEAR MR. ROCKS, A WEALTHY MAN LIKE YOU IS NEVER MAD! YOU ARE MERELY SEEING A MIRACLE OF THE AGES! MY MIRACLE!

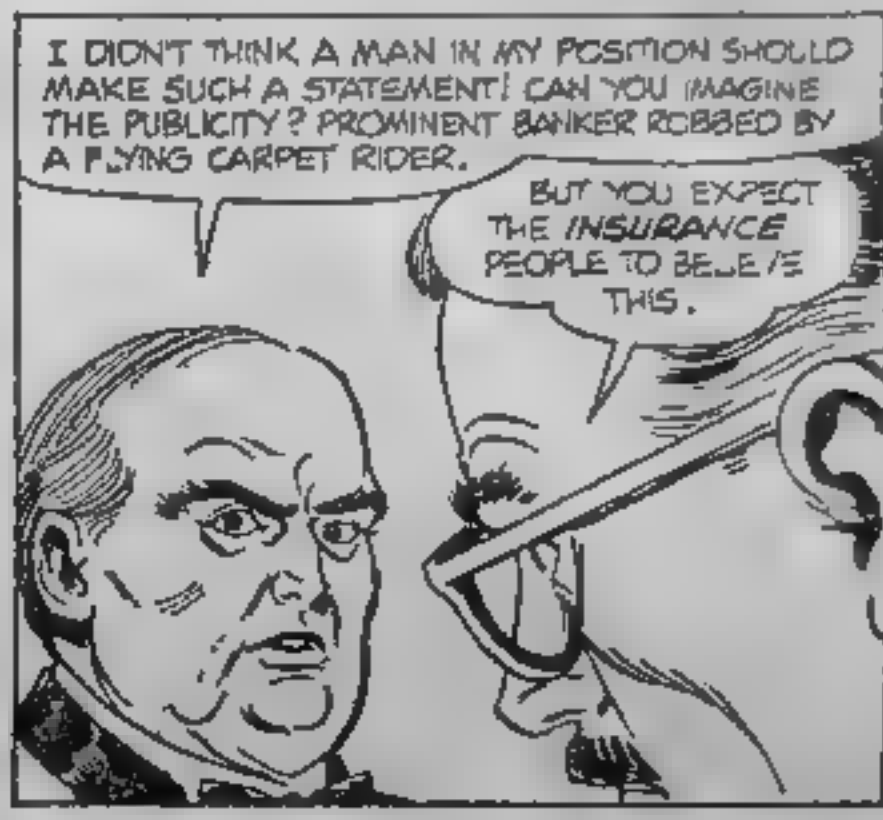
NOW, SR YOUR WALLET AND YOUR WATCH, SIR! IF YOU PLEASE!
GRUFF--GURGLE--GLUMPH!

A MOST INTERESTING COLLECTION! THANK YOU! AND NOW, IF YOU WILL KINDLY SIT ON THE FLOOR FACING THE TERRACE!


A MOMENT LATER THE IMPOSSIBLE HAPPENS... THE THIEF STEPS OUT OF A WINDOW *THIRTY STORIES* ABOVE THE STREET!
A THIEF ON A FLYING CARPET ROBBING MY PENTHOUSE! IT COULDN'T BE POSSIBLE.. BUT I SAW IT!


AND LATER THE INSURANCE PEOPLE ASK SOME CURIOUS QUESTIONS
PERHAPS I ER M-- UNDERSTOOD MR ROCKS! YOU SAY THIS THIEF ARRIVED AT YOUR PENTHOUSE ON A *FLYING CARPET!*
ABSOLUTELY *CORRECT!* AND HE PUT FARTHINGS IN OUR EARS WHEN HE LEFT

I SEE! HE CAME IN ON A FLYING CARPET, BOUND AND GAGGED YOU, AND PLUGGED YOUR EARS! HAVE YOU NOTIFIED THE POLICE?
NO! I HAVE A REPUTATION IN THIS TOWN!


I DIDN'T THINK A MAN IN MY POSITION SHOULD MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT! CAN YOU IMAGINE THE PUBLICITY? PROMINENT BANKER ROBBED BY A FLYING CARPET RIDER.
BUT YOU EXPECT THE *INSURANCE* PEOPLE TO BELIEVE THIS.

ALL RIGHT, YOU WIN! IT WAS ALL MY *IMAGINATION!* GOOD DAY, SIR!
GOOD DAY!
PHINEAS!

NOW, JUST BE QUIET, MY DEAR! IT HAD TO BE SAID! THE WORLD WILL THINK WE'RE CRAZY IF WE TELL ANYONE WHAT *REALLY* HAPPENED!

THUS, THE ROOKS DARE NOT ADMIT TO WHAT THEY KNOW IS TRUE ..AND ONE WEEK LATER...
A-AN INTRUDER... ON OUR TERRACE!
BUT HOW COULD HE GET THERE? WE'RE ON THE TWENTY-FIRST FLOOR!

THE BIZARRE FIGURE MOVES QUICKLY...
YOUR MONEY AND YOUR JEWELS, IF YOU PLEASE!-- AND I THINK I'LL TAKE THIS TOO!

AND THEN STEPS OFF THE LEDGE TO A WAITING FLYING CARPET!
HOW ARE WE GOING TO EXPLAIN THIS?

BUT THIS TIME THE INCREDIBLE CRIME IS REPORTED.. AND A CITY LAUGHS .
COUPLE CLAIMS ALI BABA THIEF RIDES ON FLYING CARPET

BUT ONE MAN DOES NOT SMILE .
NOW WE MUST GO TO THE POLICE, DEAR!
INDEED WE SHALL PHILEAS!

AND WITHIN THE HOUR, MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN IS CALLED TO THE POLICE CHIEF'S OFFICE WHERE .
SO THAT'S THE STORY, MANDRAKE! I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THE CITY'S BEING SWEPT WITH MASS INSANITY OR WHAT! BOTH COUPLES NOW THEY HAVE SEEN THIS FLYING CARPET THIEF!
I SEE! CHIEF, LET ME SPEAK TO THEM .. ONE AT A TIME!

MANDRAKE SPEAKS WITH MR ROCKS ..AND GESTURES...
YAWN YES, I ASSURE YOU, SIR, I YAWN YAWN REALLY DID SEE THE THIEF ON A FLYING CARPET YAWN
SLEEP!

THE VICTIM FALLS UNDER HYPNOTIC TELEPATHIC PROJECTION ..
HE BOUND AND GAGGED ME...PUT IN EARPLUGS...

THEN--HE FLEW OFF ..

ONE BY ONE, MANDRAKE TESTS THE STORIES VIA HYPNOTIC TELEPATHIC PROJECTION...
HJMMM—ALL FOUR AGREE!

YES, CHIEF, THEY HAVE SEEN THE SAME THING!
THUNDERATION! THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE! IF THEY AGREE IT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE ALL LYING ABOUT THE SAME THING!

THE CHIEF TRIES TO BREAK THE SUSPECTED CULPRITS IN THE * S.S. DIVISION...
NOW LET'S STOP THIS NONSENSE! YOU TWO COOKED UP THE FLYING CARPET STORY WHEN YOU HEARD THE OTHER COUPLE SAID THEY SAW ONE! YOU JUST WANT PUBLICITY!
THAT'S JUST WHAT I DON'T WANT, SIR!
* S.L.Y STUFF DIVISION.

I-I'LL SUE THE CITY! DON'T YOU REALIZE I'M A RESPECTABLE BANKER!
HMMM—NOW WHY, ASSUMING THEIR STORIES ARE TRUE, WOULD THEY ALL SAY THE THIEF PUT EARPLUGS IN THEIR EARS?

LATER MANDRAKE WEIGHS THE PROBLEM WITH NARDA AND LOTHAR...
CAN SUCH A RIDICULOUS STORY ACTUALLY BE TRUE, MANDRAKE?
THOSE PEOPLE ALL BELIEVE IT! PERHAPS SOME SORT OF HYPNOTIC PROJECTION...

SO MANY PEOPLE SEE SAME THING...TOO FOOLISH TO BE LIE, MAYBE!
YES, LOTHAR—THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT BOTHERS ME! PERHAPS WE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED!

BUT AT THIS PRECISE MOMENT AN EVEN MORE FANTASTIC IMAGE IS WINGING OVER THE CITY...

MINUTES LATER THE FLYING FIGURE LANDS...

DO NOT BE FRIGHTENED DEAR LADIES I DON'T INTENT TO TAKE YOUR BODIES, HA HA, YOU SEE I AM A GENTLEMAN THIEF!

LATER, MANDRAKE DISCUSSES THE PROBLEM WITH THE CHIEF...
THIS IS LIKE A NIGHTMARE! WE MUST HAVE SOME SORT OF MASS MADNESS ON OUR HANDS! I... JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO HANDLE IT!
I HAVE A THOUGHT, CHIEF! IT MAY HELP... BUT IT WILL TAKE A FEW DAYS TO FIND OUT!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER ON THE ROOF OF ONE OF THE CITY'S HIGHEST BUILDINGS....
GOSH, MANDRAKE, THE ARMY'S ALWAYS GLAD TO HELP YOU...BUT SCANNING ROOF TOPS FOR TWO DAYS IS PRETTY WILD!
AND SO IS OUR PROBLEM YOUNG MAN! I APPRECIATE YOUR HELP!

HOUR AFTER HOUR, MANDRAKE AND LOTHAR WAIT...THEN SUDDENLY...
HEY, I'VE GOT A CRAZY BLIP HERE!
THIS MAY BE IT!

MANDRAKE LOOKS THROUGH A SPECIAL INFRA-RED TELESCOPE THAT PIERCES THE DARKNESS...
I THINK WE HAVE SOMETHING HERE, LOTHAR...

YES! WE'VE HIT THE JACKPOT! THERE'S OUR MYSTERY RIDER!

I RECOGNIZE THAT PENTHOUSE THE THIEF IS FLYING FOR LOTHAR! WE CAN GET THERE WITHIN MINUTES!
NOW MAYBE WE FIND OUT MYSTERY!

QUICKLY! THE PENTHOUSE...YOU HAVE TROUBLE UPSTAIRS!
M-MANDRAKE!? AND LOTHAR!

THERE IS THIEF!
WE'RE TOO LATE...

MANDRAKE BOUNCES TO THE TERRACE WALL AND ...
... OR PERHAPS WE ARE NOT!

A FAKE!
IS

RATHER INGENIOUS, EH MANDRAKE?
YES. AND YOU PLACED EARPLUGS IN YOUR VICTIMS' EARS SO THEY COULDN'T HEAR THE SOUND AS YOU ESCAPED!
LOOK OUT!-- HORSE FLYING AWAY!

AS THEY SPEAK THE HELICOPTER SIGNAL CALLS UP THE FLYING HORSE AND ...
YOU SEEM TO HAVE ME AT A DISADVANTAGE, MY FLYING THIEF!
MY FRIENDS CALL ME THE TOY-MAKER!... YOU'LL BE PRIVILEGED TO SEE MY SANCTUM OF CRIME, SIR.

SOON AFTER...
HERE WE ARE, MANDRAKE-- MY HEADQUARTERS!

IN THE BIZARRE SURROUNDINGS OF THE PENTHOUSE THIEF'S LAIR...
SHALL I GET RID OF THEM NOW, DARLING?
TUT, TUT, YOU MUSTN'T BE TOO ANXIOUS! WE WILL TAKE THE GENTLEMEN OUT AND DROP THEM IN THE OCEAN IN DUE TIME! FIRST, I MUST SHOW THEM MORE OF MY TALENTS...

THIS SHOULD MAKE A MOST UNUSUAL EFFECT, DON'T YOU THINK? HOW PEOPLE WILL SHUDDER WHEN MY FLAMING DRAGON ROBS THEM!

I EXPECT TO PUT THAT IN USE VERY SHORTLY! AND OVER HERE IS MY NEWEST WEAPON...A SPACE SHIP! I'M, ER, NOT QUITE SURE HOW I SHALL UTILIZE IT YET...BUT I'LL FIND A WAY!

AS YOU CAN SEE, MANDRAKE, MY WORK IS QUITE PROFITABLE!
SO FAR, YOU MEAN! YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE A CHANCE TO SURVIVE!

WE SHALL MAKE THAT REMARK THE SIGNAL FOR YOUR END! TAKE THEM OVER THE OCEAN AND GET RID OF THEM!
WITH PLEASURE!

THEN...THE *FLYING DRAGON*...AND THE *MAGIC CARPET*...

T-THE *DRAGON* IS AFTER US! H-HE'S TRYING TO *BURN US UP!*

A-AND THE *FLYING CARPET* IS *MOVING!* H-HOW CAN IT *BE???*

S-STOP THEM, MANDRAKE...D-DON'T LET THEM GET US! I'LL SURRENDER!
PERHAPS IT IS THE EVIL OF YOUR OWN IMAGINATION THAT FRIGHTENS YOU!

MANDRAKE MAKES A GESTURE...THE HYPNOTIC VISIONS VANISH...
TIME TO CALL IN THE CHIEF!
POP!
POP!
POP!

THE PENTHOUSE THIEF HAS BEEN GROUNDED, CHIEF...

AND SHORTLY...
IT WAS ALL TRUE...THOSE PEOPLE REALLY DID SEE WHAT THEY CLAIMED! I'LL... NEVER DOUBT A WILD SOUNDING STORY AGAIN!
SOMETIMES IT IS WISE TO INVESTIGATE THE WILDEST CLAIMS, CHIEF!

AND THAT IS THE END OF TOYMAKER!
DON'T BE TOO SURE, LOTHAR! I HAVE A FEELING WE'LL SEE HIM AGAIN!

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ASTOUNDING STORIES

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OUT OF THIS WORLD

★

WEIRD PLANETS

PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW